THE COMPENDIUM

of Knowledge and Wisdom

Commentary of
Imām Nawawī's Forty Ḥadīth

IBN RAJAB AL-ḤANBALĪ

Translated by
Abdassamad Clarke

THE COMPENDIUM
of Knowledge and Wisdom

جامع العلوم والحكم
في شرح خمسين حديثاً من جوامع الكلم

IBN RAJAB AL-HANBALI

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Fora my mother Fatima Batha

Jannah lies beneath the feet of mothers

AHMAD AND NASAI

Contents

Publisher's Preface

Introduction

1. Intention
2. Islam, *Īmān* and *Iḥsān*
3. Islam is built on five
4. The Decree
5. Innovation
6. *Ḥalāl, ḥarām* and ambivalent matters
7. Sincerity and Counsel
8. Fighting
9. The forbidden and the commanded
10. Pure wholesome food
11. Doubt
12. What does not concern one
13. Loving for others what one loves for oneself
14. The blood of a Muslim
15. Whoever has Īmān in Allah and the Last Day
16. Anger
17. Excellence (*iḥsān*)

18. *Taqwā* of Allah
19. Mindfulness of Allah
20. Shame and modesty
21. *Istiqāmah*
22. The Obligations
23. Purity is half of Īmān
24. Injustice
25. The wealthy and the poor
26. *Ṣadaqah*
27. *Birr* and *ithm*
28. *Taqwā* of Allah, hearing and obedience
29. A comprehensive hadith on action
30. Obligations
31. *Zuhd* – doing without
32. Causing harm and returning harm
33. Claimants and counter-claimants
34. Seeing something objectionable
35. Brotherhood
36. Easing someone's distress
37. Good and bad actions
38. Optional acts and wilāyah
39. Mistakes, forgetfulness and coercion
40. Be in the world as if a stranger
41. Desire

42. Forgiveness
43. Inheritance
44. Breastfeeding and kinship
45. The sale of ḥarām things
46. Intoxicants
47. A full belly
48. Hypocrisy
49. Reliance on Allah
50. Remembrance of Allah

Index

Publishers Preface

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, most merciful and compassionate. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and His blessings be upon His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), the seal of prophethood, and his family and his companions and all those who follow him.

Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, who was Zayn ad-Dīn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (Rajab) as-Salāmī (736 AH/1335 CE–795 AH/1392 CE), was born in Damascus, Syria.

The author was an expert on chains of transmission and this forms the initial part of the study of each hadith. Then he moves on to examine the various narrations and supporting narrations, and fiqh rulings, supplementary material from the Companions, the Followers and the Followers of the Followers, and the ṣāliḥ‰n and ʿulamā' up until his own day. As is the case with most of the works of

major scholars, Ibn Rajab quotes from great ʿulamā' of all the madhhabs.

We would like to acknowledge the work of the International Centre for Islamic Studies of Australia in first commissioning this translation and its first major edit, and to express our thanks to them for allowing us the honour of publishing it. Then after the work of the translator we would in particular like to thank Mawlana Shams ad-Duha for his painstaking work on editing the book and in sourcing the hadith which it comprises, and Muhammad Ansa for his proofreading and indexing, and Abdallateef Whiteman for his layout and cover design. Mufti Abdullah Marufi for typing the Arabic and Shaykh Mohammed Akram for his help on sourcing biographical material on Ibn Rajab.

YAHYA BATHA

Imam Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī's Introduction

PRAISE BELONGS TO Allah Who perfected the *dīn* for us and made the blessing on us complete and Who made our ummah – and to Allah belongs the praise – the best ummah. He sent among us a Messenger from ourselves reciting His *āyāt* to us, purifying us and teaching us the Book and the Wisdom. I praise Him for His many blessings. I witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner, and this act of witnessing is the best protection for someone who seeks protection by it. I witness that Muḥammad is His slave and His Messenger whom He sent as a mercy to all creatures. He made it obligatory for him to explain what has been sent down to us, and so he elucidated all the important matters for us. He singled him out with concise comprehensive speech (*jawāmiʿ al-kalim*) so that he often expressed separate pieces of wisdom and sciences in one phrase or in half a phrase, may Allah bless him and his companions

with a blessing which will be a light for us in every darkness, and may He grant him much peace.

Allah, glorious is He and exalted, sent Muḥammad ﷺ with concise comprehensive speech. He singled him out to receive astonishing wisdoms, as has been narrated in the two Ṣaḥīḥ books[1] from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “I was sent with concise comprehensive speech.”[2] Az-Zuhrī ﷺ said, “Concise comprehensive speech, according to that which has reached us, is that Allah, exalted is He, united many issues for him, [issues] which used to be written in books before him [separately] in one or two issues and so on.”[3]

Imam Aḥmad ﷺ narrated the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿ®ṣ ﷺ that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to us one day and it was as if he were someone saying farewell. He said, ‘I am Muḥammad, the unlettered Prophet,’ saying it three times, ‘and there is no prophet after me. I have been given the first parts of speech and its conclusions and its comprehensive concision’,”[4] and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.

Abu Yaʿlā al-Mawṣilī narrated the hadith of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “I

have been given concise comprehensive speech and its conclusions and speech has been made extremely concise for me."[5]

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated from the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet that he said, "I have been granted concise comprehensive speech and speech has been made extremely concise for me."[6] We narrate from the hadith of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Isḥāq al-Qurashī, from Abū Bardah from Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī that he said, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'I was granted the openings of speech and its conclusions and its comprehensive concision.' So we said, 'Messenger of Allah! Teach us something of that which Allah, mighty and majestic is He, has taught you.'" He said, "So he taught us the *tashahhud*."[7]

In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim there is from Saʿīd ibn Abī Bardah ibn Abī Mūsā from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet was asked about al-bitʿ (a Yemeni intoxicant made from honey) and al-mizr (an intoxicant made from a grain such as sorghum but possibly barley or wheat). He [Abū Mūsā] said, "And the Messenger of Allah was given concise comprehensive speech with its conclusions. He said, 'I

forbid you every intoxicant which intoxicates [and holds you back] from prayer.’”[8]

Hishām ibn ʿAmmār related in the book *al-Mabʿath* with a chain of transmission from Abū Sālim al-Ḥabashī that he said, “I was told that the Prophet ﷺ used to say, “I have been preferred over whoever [of the Prophets] was before me with six things, without boasting.” Among those he mentioned was concise comprehensive speech, and he said, “I was granted concise comprehensive speech. The People of the Book used to make it a portion [which they recited] during the night until the morning, and my Lord expressed it for me in one āyah:

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

‘Everything in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.’[9]”[10]

The concise comprehensive speech with which he was singled out is of two kinds:

First, that which is in the Qur’ān such as His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاء ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاء وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ

“Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny.”[11] Al-Hasan said, “No good was left in this āyah without Him commanding it and no evil without Him forbidding it.”[12]

Second, that which is [the Prophet’s] speech ﷺ which is published and to be found in the sunnah [collections] which are traced back to him. The men of knowledge ﷺ compiled collections of his comprehensive words ﷺ. Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr ʿAbdullāh ibn as-Sunnī compiled a book which he called al-Ījāz wa jawāmiʿ al-kalim min as-sunan al-ma’thūrah – “The Succinctness and Concise Comprehensive Speech in the Transmitted Sunnahs”. The Qāḍī Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Quḍāʿī gathered together some of the succinct and concise comprehensive speech in a book which he called *ash-Shihāb fi’l-ḥikam wa’l-ādāb* “The Flaming Torch of Wisdom and Culture”. Some other people compiled books in the same fashion as he had done and increased [the number of hadith] greatly over the number he had mentioned. Al-Khaṭṭābī indicated in the beginning of his book *Gharīb al-ḥadīth* “Unusual hadith” a small number of the comprehensive hadith.

The Imam and Ḥāfiẓ Abū ʿAmr ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ dictated at an assembly a book which he called *al-Ḥadīth al-kulliyah* “Universal Hadith” in which he collected the comprehensive hadith about which it is said that the dīn revolves around them, and those succinct and comprehensive phrases of a similar meaning. This session of his comprises twenty-six hadith.

Then the faqīh, the Imam who did without the world, the exemplar, Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā an-Nawawī took these hadith which Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ had dictated and increased them to forty-two hadith calling his book al-Arbaʿūn “The Forty”. These forty which he collected became very famous and are memorised a great deal. Allah produced great benefit because of the blessing of the compiler’s intention and his good purpose, may Allah, exalted is He, show him mercy.

A group of seekers of knowledge and dīn repeatedly asked me to attach a commentary to these aforementioned hadith. So I asked Allah, exalted is He, to choose [by means of the duʿā called *istikhārah*] whether I should write a book comprising a commentary on those meanings of the hadith which Allah, exalted is He, makes easy [for me], and

qualifying them with whatever explanations of their principles and their structures Allah, glorious is He, would open up for me. I ask Him for help in what I intend to do and the grace of a correct intention and purpose in what I want to do. I depend in all my affair upon Him, and I disclaim any power [to avert evil] or strength [to do good] except by Him.

One of those who explained these forty hadith took their compiler to task ﷺ for leaving out the hadith, "Attach inheritances to their people, then whatever of the inheritance is left behind is for the nearest male [relative]."[13] [This critic] said, "...because it gathers together the principles of the laws of inheritance which are a half of knowledge, and so ought to have been mentioned among these comprehensive hadith just as is the hadith 'Clear proof is demanded of the claimant and the oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim]'[14] because it collects together the rules of passing judgement." So I decided to add this hadith to the forty hadith which the Shaykh ﷺ had compiled, and add other hadith of concise comprehensive speech which comprise various sciences and wisdoms, until the number of the hadith became fifty.

These are the extra hadith over and above what the Shaykh ﷺ compiled: “Attach inheritances to their people”, and the hadith, “The same things are made ḥarām by suckling which are made ḥarām by blood kinship”, and the hadith, “When Allah makes a thing ḥarām, He also makes the price paid for it ḥarām”, and the hadith, “Every intoxicant is ḥarām”, and the hadith, “The son of Adam has not filled a vessel worse than his belly”, and the hadith, “There are four [things]; whoever has them is a hypocrite”, and the hadith, “If you were to rely on Allah as He ought to be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds”, and the hadith, “May your tongue remain moist with the remembrance of Allah, exalted is He.”[15] I have called this book, *Jāmiʿ al-ʿulūm waʾl-ḥikam fī sharḥ khamsīna ḥadīthan min jawāmiʿ al-kalim* “A Collection of Sciences and Wisdoms in Commentary on Fifty Hadith from the Concise Comprehensive Speech.”

You should know that my sole intention is to explain the prophetic expressions which comprise these universal hadith. For that reason I will not qualify the Shaykh’s words ﷺ in which he introduces the narrators of these hadith such as the Companions

ﷺ nor his expressions in ascribing [the hadith] to the books to which he ascribes them. I will only produce the meaning which indicates that, since I have told you that my intention is only to explain the concise and comprehensive words of the Prophet ﷺ and what disciplines, wisdom, gnoses, judgements and parts of the Sharīʿah they comprise. Before speaking in explanation of the hadith, I will briefly indicate its chain of transmission, so that its authenticity, strength or weakness is known. I will mention some of those hadith which are related in the same sense, if there are any hadith in that category other than the hadith which the Shaykh mentioned. If there are no other hadith in that category, or if no others in it are authentic, then I will draw attention to all of that. By Allah there is success and He is the One from whom help is sought and upon whom one depends, and there is no power [to avert evil] nor strength [to do good] except by Allah.

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim are referred to as the two Ṣaḥīḥ books (Ṣaḥīḥayn).

2 Al-Bukhārī (7013) and Muslim (523)

3 Imam al-Bukhārī mentions this comment by az-Zuhrī after narrating the aforementioned hadith.

4 Narrated by Imam Aḥmad in his Musnad (2:172). Al-Haythamī says in Majmaʿ az Zawā'id (1:169) that the chain of this hadith has ʿAbdullāh ibn Lahīʿah who is a weak narrator. However the meaning of the hadith is correct and well supported by other narrations and therefore can be classed as ḥasan (good).

5 As mentioned in al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliyah (4:28) where the hadith has been ascribed to Abu Yaʿlā. Al-Haythamī says in Majmaʿ az-zawā'id (1:182) that the chain has ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Isḥāq who is weak.

6 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (4:144-145). The chain has Zakariyyā ibn ʿAṭiyyah whose hadith are [sometimes] munkar (rejected because they conflict with āyāt of the Qur'ān or other hadith which are better established). The narration is therefore weak.

7 This hadith is narrated by the author with his own chain.

8 Muslim (1733).

9 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 1.

10 Muslim (523).

11 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 90.

12 Al-Bayhaqī in Shuʿab al-īmān. (Ad-Durr al-manthūr)

13 Hadith 43 in this compilation.

14 Hadith 33 in this compilation.

15 Hadith nos. 43-50 in this compilation.

الحديث الأول

عَنْ أَمِيْرِ المؤْمِنِينَ أَبِي حَفْصٍ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ ﷺ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ؛ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا، أَوِ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا؛ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Intention

The Amīr al-Mu’minīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Actions are only by intentions, and each man has only that which he intends. Whoever’s emigration is for Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever’s emigration is for some worldly gain which he can acquire or a woman he will marry, then his emigration is for that for which he emigrates’.”[1]

Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al-Anṣārī alone narrated this hadith from Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm at-Taymī from ʿAlqamah ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Laythī, from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ. There are no other authentic paths of transmission for it apart from this one, as ʿAlī al-Madīnī and others said. Al-Khaṭṭābī said, "I know of no disagreement among the people of hadith about that," even though it is narrated as a hadith of Abū Saʿīd and others, and it is said that it has been narrated by numerous paths, but none of that is authentic according to the people who memorise [hadith]. Later a great number of people narrated it from al-Anṣārī. It is said that more than two hundred narrators transmitted it from him, and it is even said that it was seven hundred. Among the great ones who narrated it were Imam Mālik, ath-Thawrī, al-Awzāʿī, Ibn al-Mubārak, al-Layth ibn Saʿd, Ḥammād ibn Zayd, Shuʿbah, Ibn ʿUyaynah and others.

The people of knowledge agreed that it is authentic and accepted it totally. Al-Bukhārī began his *Ṣaḥīḥ* with it and established it in the position of the introduction to it, by which he indicated that every action not intended for the sake of the face of Allah is invalid and fruitless in the world and in the next

world. For that reason ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī said, “If I were to write a book in chapters, I would put the hadith of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb on ‘actions are only by intentions’ in every chapter.” Some also say that he said, “Whoever wishes to compile a book, let him begin with the hadith, ‘Actions are only by intentions.’”

This hadith is one of those around which the *dīn* revolves. It is narrated that ash-Shāfiʿī said, “This hadith is one third of all knowledge, and it is involved in seventy sections of *fiqh*.” Imam Aḥmad ﷺ said, “The foundations of Islam are based on three hadith: the hadith of ʿUmar, ‘Actions are by intentions’, and the hadith of ʿĀ’ishah, ‘Whoever innovates in this affair of ours that which is not from it then it is rejected’, and the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr, ‘The ḥalāl is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear’.” Al-Ḥākim said, “They narrated to us from ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] from his father that he mentioned his words ﷺ, ‘Actions are by intentions’ and his words, ‘The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days’ and his words, ‘Whoever innovates in our *dīn* whatever is not of it then it is rejected,’ and then he said, ‘These hadith ought to

begin every compilation, because they are the foundations of the hadith.'"

Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh said, "Four hadith are among the foundations of the *dīn*: the hadith of ʿUmar, 'Actions are only by intentions', and the hadith, 'The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear', and the hadith, 'The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days' and the hadith, 'Whoever makes anything in our affair which is not of it, then it is rejected'."

ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd narrated from Abū ʿUbayd that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ gathered together all the business of the next world in one expression: 'Whoever innovates in our affair that which is not from it, then it is rejected', and he gathered the business of the world in one expression: 'Actions are only by intentions'. These two enter into every chapter."

Abū Dāwūd said, "I thought about the hadith which are narrated with chains of transmission and found them to be four thousand hadith. Then I thought further and found that the pivot of these four thousand lies in four hadith: the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr, 'The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear', the hadith of ʿUmar, 'Actions are only by intentions', the hadith of

Abū Hurayrah, ‘Allah is good and wholesome and only accepts what is good and wholesome, and Allah commands the *mu’minūn* with that with which He commands the Messengers…’ and the hadith, ‘A part of the excellence of a man’s *dīn* is his leaving alone that which does not concern him.’” He said, “Each one of these four hadith is one quarter of knowledge.”

Abū Dāwūd ﷺ also said, “I recorded five hundred thousand hadith of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from which I chose those which comprise this book,” – meaning *Kitāb as-Sunan* – “in which I collected four thousand eight hundred hadith, of which four hadith are sufficient for a man’s *dīn*: the first of which are his words ﷺ, ‘Actions are by intentions’, second, his words ﷺ, ‘A part of the excellence of a man’s *dīn* is his leaving what does not concern him’, third, his words ﷺ, ‘The *mu’min* will not be a mu’min until he is only contented for his brother with that with which he is contented for himself’, and fourth, his words ﷺ, ‘The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear.’”

In another narration he said, “*Fiqh* revolves around five hadith: ‘The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear’, and his words ﷺ, ‘There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm’, and his words, ‘Actions are by

intentions' and his words, 'The *dīn* is sincerity,' and his words, 'That which I have forbidden you, avoid it, and that which I have commanded you, do that of it which you are able'."

In another narration he said, "The principles of the sunnahs in every field are four hadith: the hadith of ʿUmar, 'Actions are by intentions', and the hadith, 'The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear', and the hadith, 'A part of the excellence of a man's *dīn* is his leaving alone that which does not concern him', and the hadith, 'Do without the world and Allah will love you, and do without what is in people's hands and people will love you."[2]

Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Ḥasan Ṭāhir ibn Mufawwiz al-Muʿāfirī al-Andalusī wrote:

The pillars of the *dīn* for us are four expressions from the Best of Creation:

Beware of ambiguities,
do without,
and leave what does not concern you
and act with intention.

His saying ﷺ, “Actions are only by intentions” and in another narration, “Actions are by intentions”, both of which necessarily imply restriction [of the meaning to the sense of “only”] according to the authentic position, but it is not our aim here to address that nor to say a lot about it.

There are different understandings of his words, “Actions are by intentions” and many of the later [scholars] claim that it means “Actions are correct by, or judged according to, or are acceptable by intentions.” According to this what is meant by actions are the actions of the *Sharīʿah* which require intentions. As for what does not need intention, ordinary everyday acts such as eating, drinking, dressing, etc., or for example, returning trusts and guarantees such as deposits and things which have been forcibly expropriated, then none of these things require intentions, so that all of these are excluded from the general actions mentioned here.

Others say that ‘actions’ here are general and that nothing is excluded from them, and someone said that this is the majority opinion, by which he seems to have meant the majority of the earlier generations. That is in the words of Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī and Abū

Ṭālib al-Makkī and others of the earlier generations, and it is what is apparent from the words of Imam Aḥmad. He said in the narration of Ḥanbal, "I prefer that everyone who does an act such as prayer, fasting, *ṣadaqah* or any type of good action, that an intention should precede the doing of it. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Actions are by intentions' and this applies to every single affair."

Al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād said, "I asked Abū ʿAbdullāh – meaning Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] – about intention in action, and I asked, 'How is the intention?' He said, 'One struggles with oneself – if one means to do an action – not intending it for people.' "

Aḥmad ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥarbī said, "Yazīd ibn Hārūn narrated ʿUmar's hadith 'Actions are by intentions' while Aḥmad was sitting, and Aḥmad said to Yazīd, 'Abū Khalid, this is suffocation (*khunāq*).'"[3]

According to this statement some said that what is to be understood from the words is, "Actions happen or actually take place according to their intentions," so that he informs us that a voluntary action only comes about by an intention from the one who does it, which is the cause of the action and of its existence. Then his words after that, "and for each man there is only that

which he intends," informs us about the *Sharīʿah* judgement which is that for the one who does the action the intention is his portion of the action. If it is good then his action is good and he will have its reward, but if it is corrupt then his action is corrupt, and the burden of it will be upon him. It is possible then that the meaning of his words, "actions are only by intentions" is that "actions are right, corrupt, acceptable or rejected, rewarded or unrewarded according to the intentions" and thus inform us of the judgement of the shari'ah that the action's rightness or corruption is according to the rightness of the intention or its corruption, as in his words ﷺ, "actions are according to results", i.e. their rightness, their corruption, their acceptability or their lack of it are according to the results.

His words after that, "and for each man there is only that which he intends," informs us that nothing comes about from someone's action except that which he intends by it. If he intends good, good will come about from it, and if he intends evil, evil will come about from it. This is not purely a repetition of the first phrase, because the first phrase points out that the rightness or the wrongness of an action is

according to the intention which brought it into existence, whereas the second phrase points out that the reward of the one who does the action for the action is according to his right intention, and that his punishment for it is according to his wrong intention. It is also possible that his intention is [merely] permissible (*mubāḥ*) so that the action would be permissible, and thus he would not obtain any reward or receive punishment for it. Thus the action in itself – its rightness, wrongness or permissibility – is according to the intention which motivates it and brings it into existence, and the reward for the one who does the action, his punishment and his [merely] being safe, are according to his intention by which the action became right, wrong, or permitted.

You should know that linguistically intention means a type of purpose and will, even though there are distinctions made between these expressions, but this is not the place to mention that.

In the words of the people of knowledge, intention has two meanings:

First: to distinguish some acts of worship from others, for example to distinguish the midday prayer from the afternoon prayer, and to distinguish the fast

of Ramaḍān from other fasts, or to distinguish acts of worship from ordinary everyday acts, such as distinguishing the *ghusl* performed after sexual intercourse from bathing in order to cool oneself or for the purpose of cleanliness, etc. This meaning of intention is found a great deal in the language of the *fuqahā*' in their books.

Second: to distinguish the purpose of the action, whether it is for Allah alone without partner, or for Allah as well as for other than Him. This is the intention about which the gnostics speak in their books when they talk about sincerity and its consequences, and it is the one which is to be found a great deal in the words of the right-acting first generations.

Abū Bakr ibn Abi'd-Dunyā compiled a work which he called, *Kitāb alikhlāṣ wa'n-niyyah* "The Book of Sincerity and Intention" by which he meant only this [second meaning of] intention, which is also the intention which is repeatedly mentioned in the words of the Prophet ﷺ sometimes with the expression '*niyyah*' (intention), sometimes with the expression '*irādah*' (will), and sometimes with an expression close to that. It has been mentioned many times in the Book

of Allah ﷻ also without use of the term ‘intention’ but with expressions close in meaning to that.

Those who distinguish between ‘intention’, ‘will’, ‘purpose’ and similar words do so because of their view that ‘intention’ only has the first meaning which the *fuqahā*’ mention. Some of them say, “The intention is specific to the act of the one who intends, and will or ‘wanting’ is not specific to that, just as a person might want Allah to forgive him but not intend it.” But we have mentioned that intention in the language of the Prophet ﷺ and the early generations of the ummah was in the main only used for this second meaning, and it was at that time used to mean ‘will’ or ‘want’. For that reason it is very often expressed by the term ‘will’ in the Qur’ān, as in His words, exalted is He:

مِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ الآخِرَةَ

“Among you are those who want the *dunyā* and among you are those who want the *ākhirah*.”[4]

And His words ﷻ:

تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الآخِرَةَ

“You desire the goods of the *dunyā*, whereas Allah desires the *ākhirah*.”[5]

And His words:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ

“If anyone desires to cultivate the *ākhirah*, We will increase him in his cultivation. If anyone desires to cultivate the dunyā, We will give him some of it but he will have no share in the *ākhirah*.”[6]

And His words, exalted is He:

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاء لِمَن نُّرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلاهَا مَذْمُوماً مَّدْحُوراً . وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُوْلَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُوراً

“As for anyone who desires this fleeting existence, We hasten in it whatever We will to whoever We want. Then We will consign him to Hell where he will roast, reviled and driven out. But as for anyone who desires the *ākhirah*, and strives for it with the striving it deserves, being a *mu’min*, the striving of such people will be gratefully acknowledged.”[7]

And His words, exalted is He:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"As for those who desire the life of the *dunyā* and its finery, We will give them full payment in it for their actions. They will not be deprived here of their due. But such people will have nothing in the *ākhirah* but the Fire. What they achieved here will come to nothing. What they did will prove to be null and void."[8]

And His words:

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

"Do not chase away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face."[9]

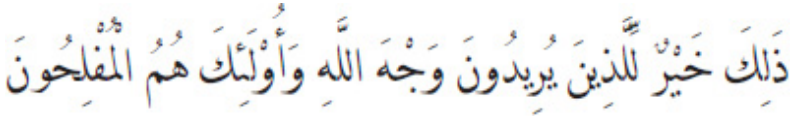
And His words:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

"Restrain yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, desiring His face. Do

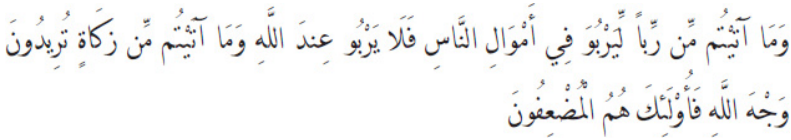
not turn your eyes from them, desiring the attractions of this world."[10]

And His words:


ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

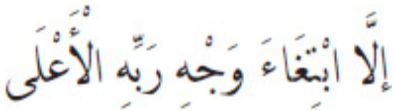
"That is best for those who seek the pleasure of Allah. They are the ones who are successful."[11]

And His words


وَمَا آتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَ فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُو عِندَ اللَّهِ وَمَا آتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُونَ

"What you give with usurious intent, aiming to get back a greater amount from people's wealth, does not become greater with Allah. But anything you give as *zakāh*, seeking the Face of Allah – all who do that will get back twice as much."[12]

Also it is expressed in the Qur'ān with the expression *ibtighā'* – "desiring"


إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَىٰ

"...desiring only the Face of their Lord Most High."[13] And His words:

– as in His words, exalted is He:

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتاً مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ

"The metaphor of those who spend their wealth, desiring the pleasure of Allah and firmness for themselves..."[14]

And His words:

وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلاَّ ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ

"...when you give desiring only the Face of Allah."[15]

And His words:

لاَّ خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلاَحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْراً عَظِيماً

"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward."[16]

He denies that there is any good in much of what people discuss together except for when they command the well-recognised good actions, of which He singles out *ṣadaqah* and putting things right between people because of the universal benefit in them. It indicates that confidential discussions for that purpose are good. As for the reward for it from Allah, He singles it out for whoever does it desiring the good pleasure of Allah. He only regards commanding the well-recognised virtues such as *ṣadaqah* and putting things right between people, etc., good even if one does not desire the face of Allah by it because of the unlimited benefit which is a consequence of it, so that people attain good and excellence because of it. As for commanding [the well-recognised good actions], then if someone intends the face of Allah by it and desires His good pleasure, it is good for him and he will be rewarded for it. However, if someone does not intend that there is no good in it for him and no reward for doing it. This is contrary to the case of someone who prays or fasts and does *dhikr* of Allah intending by that some worldly advantage, because for him there will be altogether no good in it, because the benefit in it does not reach beyond him to any other, O Allah, except

someone else who models himself on him in that [and sincerely worships and remembers Allah in imitation of the man who is in fact only showing off].

As for that which is related in the Sunnah and the words of the first right-acting generations naming this meaning "intention", there is a great deal of it. We will mention some of it, such as that Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī related from the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever goes on an expedition in the way of Allah only intending [to acquire] a cord to be used for hobbling a camel, will have what he intends."[17]

Imam Aḥmad related from the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Truly, most of the *shuhadā'* [people who die in the Way of Allah] of my ummah will be people of the beds,[18] and how often someone who is killed between two rows [of warriors] Allah knows best his intention."[19]

Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "People will be assembled according to their intentions."[20] In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ he said, "People will only be made to rise [on the Day of Rising] according to their intentions."[21]

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated from the hadith of ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "People who fought each other will only be made to rise according to their intentions."[22]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Umm Salamah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ, "Someone who takes refuge will seek refuge at the House, and an expeditionary force will be sent against him. Then when they are in a desert part of the land, the earth will cave in with them." I [Umm Salamah] asked, "Messenger of Allah, what about someone who had been coerced [into joining the army]?" He said, "It will cave in with him along with them, but he will be made to rise on the Day of Rising according to his intention."[23] There is a hadith with a similar meaning from ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ in which he said, "They will all be destroyed at once, and they will issue forth from different points of origin, and Allah will make them rise according to their intentions."[24]

Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah related the hadith of Zayd ibn Thābit that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever's concern is the world, then Allah will disperse his unity," and in another wording, "[disperse] his affair, and He will put his need in front of his eyes and only

that of the world will come to him which is written for him. Whoever's intention is the next world, Allah will unite his affair and place his wealth in his heart and the world will come to him in spite of itself." This is the wording of Ibn Mājah. The wording of Aḥmad is, "Whoever's concern is the next world. ... and whoever's intention is the world."[25] Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā related it and he had, "Whoever's intention is the next world ... and whoever's intention is the world."

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ "Truly, you never spend anything desiring by it the face of Allah, but that you will be rewarded for it, even the morsel of food which you place in your wife's mouth."[26] Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated from ʿUmar, but with an interrupted (*munqaṭiʿ*)[27] chain of transmission, that he said, "There is no action for someone who has no intention, and there is no reward for someone who has no expectation," meaning that there is no reward for someone who does not anticipate a reward for his action from Allah ﷻ.

With a weak chain of transmission from Ibn Masʿūd there is that he said, "Words do not benefit unless there is action, and words and actions do not benefit

unless there are intentions, and words, actions and intentions are no use unless they accord with the Sunnah."

Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr said, "Know intention, because it is more far-reaching than action." Zubayd al-Yāmī said, "I prefer to have an intention in every thing, even eating and drinking." He also said, "Make an intention for every thing by which you mean good, even going to the rubbish dump."

Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā'ī said, "I think that all good is only united in good intention, and it is sufficient good for you even if you do not become worn out." Dāwūd said, "Solicitous concern for the well-being of others (*birr*) is the aspiration of someone who fears [Allah], and even if all of his limbs are connected to love of the world, one day his intention will return him to his origin."

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, "I have not concerned myself with anything more difficult for me than my intention, because it fluctuates."

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said, "Purifying the intention of its corruption is more difficult for people of action than long exertion."

Someone asked Nāfiʿ ibn Jubayr, “Will you not come to the funeral prayer?” He said, “As you are! Not until I form my intention.” They say that he thought for a little and then said, “Proceed.”

Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh said, “Rightness of the heart comes from right action. Right action comes from right intention.”

Someone of the early right-acting generations said, “Whoever is pleased to perfect and complete his action then let him make his intention good, because Allah ﷻ rewards the slave when his intention is good even if it is only [in the giving of] a morsel of food.”

Ibn al-Mubārak said, “Many a small action is exalted by intention, and many a great action is lessened by intention.”

Ibn ʿAjlān said, “Action is not right without three [things]: fearful awareness (*taqwā*) for the sake of Allah, good intention, and hitting the mark.”

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, “Allah ﷻ only wants from you your intention and your will.”

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said, “Preferring Allah ﷻ is better than being killed in His way.”

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated all of that in *Kitāb al-ikhlāṣ wa’n-niyyah* “The Book of Sincerity and

Intention”. He also narrated in it with an interrupted chain of transmission from ʿUmar that he said, “The best of actions is to perform what Allah ﷻ has made obligatory, and to be cautious of what Allah ﷻ has forbidden, and [to have] a true intention for that which is with Allah ﷻ.”

From this we know the meaning of what is narrated from Imam Aḥmad that the foundations of Islam are three hadith: the hadith, “Actions are only by intentions”, the hadith, “Whoever innovates in our affair that which is not from it, then it is rejected,” and the hadith, “The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear”, because all of the *dīn* can be reduced to doing those things which are commanded, giving up those things which are forbidden and desisting from doubtful things, all of which the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr contains. That is only made complete by two matters:

First, that the action in its outward form should accord with the Sunnah, which the hadith of ʿĀ’ishah implies, “Whoever innovates in our affair that which is not from it, then it is rejected,”

Second, that by the action one inwardly intends the face of Allah ﷻ as is implied by the hadith of ʿUmar, “Actions are only by intentions.”

About His words, exalted is He:

لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً

“...to test which of you is best in action,”[28] al-Fuḍayl said, “Most sincere and most correct.” He said, “If an action is sincerely intended but it is not correct it is not accepted, and if it is correct but it is not sincere it is not accepted until it is sincere and correct.” He said, “Sincerity is when it is for the sake of Allah ﷻ. Correctness is when it is according to the Sunnah.” Something that proves this thing that al-Fuḍayl said is His words ﷻ:

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَداً

“So let him who hopes to meet his Lord act rightly and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.”[29]

One of the gnostics said, “They are distinguished in terms of merit by their intentions, not by fasting and prayer.”

His words ﷺ, “So whoever’s emigration is for Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever’s emigration is for something of the world which he obtains or a woman whom he marries, then his emigration is for that for which he emigrates.” When he ﷺ mentioned that actions are in accordance with intentions, and that for the one who acts his portion of his action is his intention whether good or bad, and these two comprehensive expressions encompass every matter, then he mentioned an example of an action after that whose outward form is single, but whose rightness or corruption differ according to intention, and so it is as if he was saying that all other actions follow the example of this one.

The essence of emigration is abandoning the land of *shirk* [where others than Allah are associated as partners with Him] and moving to the abode of Islam, just as the Emigrants, before the Opening of Makkah [to Islam], would emigrate from it to the Madinah of the Prophet ﷺ and already those of them who had done so had before that emigrated to the Negus in the land of the Ethiopians. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ informed us that this emigration differs according to the

different purposes and intentions behind it. Whoever emigrates to the abode of Islam from love of Allah and His Messenger and out of desire to learn the *dīn* of Islam, and to be able to practise his *dīn* openly whereas he had been unable to do that in the abode of *shirk*, then this is the one who truly emigrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. It is sufficient for him as honour and as a boast that he attains what he intends of emigrating for the sake of Allah and His Messenger.

With this meaning in mind, he confined himself in the main clause of the conditional sentence to repeating the conditional clause word for word [“then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger”], since the attainment of that which he intended by his emigration is the limit of what can be sought in this world and the next. Whoever’s emigration is from the abode of *shirk* to the abode of Islam to attain some worldly thing or a woman whom he wishes to marry in the abode of Islam, then his emigration is for the purpose for which he emigrates: the former is a trader and the second courts a wife, and neither of them are emigrants.

In his words, "...to that which he emigrates," there is contempt and scorn for that worldly matter which he seeks, since he did not mention it by name. Also, emigration for Allah and His Messenger is single without any multiplicity, and for that reason he repeated the main clause in the wording of the conditional clause. There are limitless types of emigration for worldly affairs: sometimes a person will emigrate in order to seek some permitted worldly thing, and sometimes for something forbidden. The individual worldly things which are intended by emigration are innumerable, and so for that reason he said, "Then his emigration is to that for which he emigrates," meaning, "whatever it may be."

It has been related from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ in commentary of His words, exalted is He:

إِذَا جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ

"When women who have *īmān* come to you as *muhājirūn*, submit them to a test..."[30]

He said, "When a woman used to come to the Prophet ﷺ he would make her swear an oath by Allah that she had not emigrated because of dislike for her

husband, and by Allah she had not emigrated preferring one land over another, and by Allah she had not emigrated seeking something of the world, and by Allah she had only emigrated from love of Allah and His Messenger." Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Jarīr narrated it, al-Bazzār in his *Musnad*, and at-Tirmidhī narrated it in some copies of his book in an abbreviated form.[31]

Wakīʿ narrated in his book from al-Aʿmash from Shaqīq – Abū Wā'il – that he said, "A nomadic Arab from the area proposed to a woman called Umm Qays but she refused to marry him unless he emigrated, so he emigrated and she married him, and we used to call him, 'The Emigrant for the sake of Umm Qays.'" He said, "So ʿAbdullāh – meaning Ibn Masʿūd – said, 'Whoever emigrates desiring something, then it [his emigration] is for it [that for which he emigrates]."[32] The context here implies that this did not happen in the time of the Prophet ﷺ but in the time of Ibn Masʿūd [after the death of the Prophet ﷺ], however it has been narrated by way of Sufyān ath-Thawrī from al-Aʿmash from Abū Wā'il from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, "Among us there was a man who proposed to a woman called Umm Qays, but she refused to marry him unless he emigrated, and so he emigrated, and we

used to call him ‘The Emigrant for the Sake of Umm Qays’.” Ibn Masʿūd said, “Whoever emigrates for something, then it [his emigration] is for it [that for which he emigrates].”[33]

It has become well known that the story of the emigrant for the sake of Umm Qays was the reason for the words of the Prophet ﷺ, “Whoever’s emigration is for the sake of some worldly thing which he attains or a woman whom he marries…” and many of the later scholars mention that in their books but we have not seen any sound source with an authentic chain of transmission for that, and Allah knows best.

All of the other actions are like emigration in this context, their soundness or corruption are according to the intention which causes them, such as *jihād* and Ḥajj, etc. The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the different intentions people have for *jihād* and what they intend by it, such as showing off, showing their courage, tribalism, etc., and which one of them is in the way of Allah? He said, “Whoever fights so that the Word of Allah be uppermost is in the way of Allah.” Every worldly motive they had asked about was omitted.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books it is narrated from Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī that a nomadic Arab came to the

Prophet ﷺ and asked, “Messenger of Allah, one man fights for spoils, and one man fights for fame, and another man fights so that his position will be seen, so who is it that is in the way of Allah?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Whoever fights so that the Word of Allah is uppermost is in the way of Allah.” In a version of Muslim’s there is that, “He ﷺ was asked about a man who fights from bravery, one who fights defensively and another who fights to show off, which of them is in the way of Allah?...” In another version of his there is [mention of], “a man who fights out of anger or [another who] fights defensively.”[34]

An-Nasā’ī reported a hadith of Abū Umāmah that he said, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘What do you think of a man who goes on a military expedition seeking reward and fame, what will he get?’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Nothing!’ Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Truly, Allah only accepts that which is sincere and by which His face is desired.’”[35]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah, “That a man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah! A man wants *jihād* and he desires some of the world’s goods?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘There is no reward for

him.' The man repeated it three times while the Prophet ﷺ kept saying, 'There is no reward for him.'"[36]

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd related the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are two types of military expeditions. As for someone who desires the face of Allah, obeys the imam [the amir], spends of his precious substance, is lenient to his companions and avoids making corruption, then [both] his sleep and his vigilance are rewarded.[37] As for someone who goes on a military expedition boastfully, showing off, seeking reputation, disobeying the imam and creating corruption in the land, then he will not return with sufficiency."[38]

Abū Dāwūd related the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me about *jihād* and military expeditions.' He said, 'If you fight steadfastly and anticipating a reward, then Allah will raise you up as one who is steadfast and anticipating a reward. If you fight showing off and vying [with each other as to who will attain the most spoils], then Allah will raise you up showing off and vying. In whatever state you fight or are killed, then Allah will raise you up in that state.'"[39]

Muslim related the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘The first person to have judgement passed on him on the Day of Rising will be a man who was killed as a martyr (*shahīd*) and he will be brought, and He will show him His blessings and he will acknowledge them. He will say, ‘So what did you do for them?’ and he will say, ‘I fought for You until I was killed as a martyr (*shahīd*).’ He will say, ‘You lie! But rather you fought so that it might be said, “[He was] daring,” and that has been said.’ Then the command will be given and he will be dragged on his face and thrown in the Fire.

“[Then there will be] a man who learnt knowledge and taught it and who recited the Qur’ān. He will be brought, and He will show him His blessings and he will acknowledge them. He will say, ‘What did you do for them?’ and he will say, ‘I learnt knowledge and taught it, and recited the Qur’ān for You.’ He will say, ‘You lie! But rather you learnt knowledge so that someone might say, “[He is] a man of knowledge,” and you recited Qur’ān so that someone might say, “[He is] a Qur’ān reciter,” and it has been said.’ Then the command will be given and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown in the Fire.

“[Then there will be] a man to whom Allah was enormously generous giving him all kinds of wealth. He will be brought and He will show him His blessings and he will acknowledge them, and He will say, ‘So what did you do for them?’ He will say, ‘I didn’t leave any way in which You love wealth to be spent but that I spent in it for You.’ He will say, ‘You lie! But rather you did it so that someone might say, “He is very generous,” and that has been said.’ Then the command will be given and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown in the Fire.”[40]

In the hadith there is that when this hadith reached Muʿāwiyah he wept until he fainted. When he recovered he said, “Allah and His Messenger told the truth. Allah ﷻ says:

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ

‘As for those who desire the life of the *dunyā* and its finery, We will give them full payment in it for their actions. They will not be deprived here of their due. But such people will have nothing in the *ākhirah* but the Fire.’”[41]

A warning has been transmitted against learning knowledge for any other purpose than the face of Allah, as Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah related from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Whoever learns knowledge of that type by which the face of Allah is sought and only learns it to obtain some of the world’s goods, then he will not find the odour of the Garden on the Day of Rising,”[42] meaning, its scent.

At-Tirmidhī related a hadith of Kaʿb ibn Mālik that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever seeks knowledge in order to argue with foolish people, or to compete with people of knowledge, or to turn people’s faces towards him, then Allah will put him in the Fire.”[43] Ibn Mājah related the same meaning from a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, Hudhayfah and Jābir, may Allah be pleased with them, from the Prophet ﷺ and the wording of Jābir is, “Do not learn knowledge in order to complete with people of knowledge or to argue with foolish people or to do well in assemblies. For whoever does that, then [beware of] the Fire! The Fire!”[44] Ibn Masʿūd said, “Do not learn knowledge for three reasons: to argue with foolish people, or to dispute with *fuqahā*’, or to turn people’s faces towards you. Seek from your words and

your actions that which is with Allah because it endures and what is other than it will go away."

A warning is transmitted about acting for the sake of other than Allah, in general, as Imam Aḥmad related from a hadith of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Tell this ummah the good news of high rank, might, exaltation, *dīn* and firm establishment in the land. Whoever of them does the work of the next life for the sake of the world will have no portion in the next life."[45]

Know that there are a number of types of acting for other than Allah: sometimes it is pure showing off such that someone only intends to be seen by people for some worldly purpose, which is the state of the hypocrites in their *ṣalāh*, as Allah ﷻ says:

وَإِذَا قَامُوا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟ كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

"When they get up to pray, they get up lazily, showing off to people, and only remembering Allah a very little."[46]

He says, exalted is He:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ

“So woe to those who do *ṣalāh*, and are forgetful of their *ṣalāh*, those who show off…”[47]

Similarly Allah, exalted is He, describes the *kāfirūn* as merely showing off, in His words:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بَطَرًا وَرِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ

“Do not be like those who left their homes in arrogance, showing off to people and barring them from the way of Allah.”[48]

This unalloyed showing off is unlikely to issue from a *mu’min* in the *ṣalāh* or the fast, but it may issue from him in the obligatory *ṣadaqah* (the *zakāh*) or the Ḥajj and other outward actions or in those actions whose benefits go beyond the person themselves, because sincerity in them is very difficult. The Muslim does not doubt that this action is void and its perpetrator deserves the abhorrence of Allah and punishment.

Sometimes an action can be for the sake of Allah but there is some showing off in it. If the showing off occurs in its fundamental parts then authentic texts show that it is invalid and void.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah, blessed is He and exalted, said, ‘I am the most independent of partners

from the ascription of partnership. Whoever does an action in which he associates other than Me as a partner with Me, then I abandon him and his partner."[49] Ibn Mājah also related it and his wording is, "Then I am free of it and it is for the one whom he associated as a partner."[50]

Imam Aḥmad related from Shaddād ibn Aws, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Someone who prays showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah], and someone who fasts showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah], and someone who pays *ṣadaqah* showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah]. Truly, Allah ﷻ says, 'I am the best divider of the shares for the one who associates anything with Me, because all of his action, whether it is much or little, is for his partner whom he associated as a partner with Me; I have no need of it."[51]

Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī Faḍālah – and he was one of the Companions – that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "When Allah gathers together the first and the last on the Day about which there is no doubt, a crier will call out, 'Whoever associated a partner in an action which he did for Allah ﷻ then let him seek his reward from other than Allah ﷻ because of all

partners Allah is the One Who has least need of the association of partners."[52]

Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad* the hadith of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Truly, Allah ﷻ says, 'I am the best partner, for whoever associates a partner with Me, then it is for My partner.' People! Purify your actions for the sake of Allah ﷻ because Allah only accepts actions that are purely for His sake. Do not say, 'This is for Allah and for kindred,' because it is for kindred and none of it is for Allah. Do not say, 'This is for Allah and for your sakes,' because it is for your sakes and none of it is for Allah."[53]

An-Nasā'ī narrated with a good chain of transmission from Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī ﷺ that, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, 'Messenger of Allah, what do you think about a man who goes on a military expedition seeking reward and renown?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'There will be nothing for him.' The man asked him about it three times and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept saying, 'There will be nothing for him.' Then he said, 'Truly, Allah only accepts actions which are purely for Him and by which His face is sought.'"[54]

Al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that he said, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, I take a stand by which I intend the face of Allah, and I want my stand to be seen?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not reply to him, until there was revealed:[55]

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَداً

‘So let him who hopes to meet his Lord act rightly and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.’”[56]

Among those from whom this same sense is narrated – that when any showing off is mixed with an action it is invalid – are a whole party of the first right-acting generations, among whom were ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, Abū’d-Dardā’, al-Ḥasan, Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and others. Among the *mursal*[57] hadith which al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymirah narrated from the Prophet ﷺ is that he said, “Allah does not accept an action in which there is showing off to the weight of a mustard seed.”[58]

We know of no disagreement among the first right-acting generations about this, even if there is some disagreement among the later generations. If someone mixes an intention, which is not showing off, with his

intention for *jihād*, for example taking a wage for the service, or taking something from the spoils, or trading [while on the expedition], then the reward of the *jihād* will be decreased by that amount but it will not be entirely invalidated. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, there is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the warriors gain spoils they hasten with two-thirds of their reward [in this world], but if they do not gain anything then they have a complete reward[in the *ākhirah*]."[59] We have previously mentioned a number of hadith which show that whoever intends to gain some worldly goods by his *jihād* has no reward, which are interpreted to refer to someone who has no other intention but worldly gain in his *jihād*.

Imam Aḥmad said, "The reward of the merchant, the hired man, the one who leases [possibly riding animals for *jihād*] depend on how pure their intentions are for the military expeditions, but they are not the same as the one who struggles with himself and his own wealth without mixing anything else with it." He also said about someone who takes a prize for *jihād* that if he does not embark for the sake of the dirhams there is no harm in him accepting them. It is as if he

goes out for the sake of his *dīn*, and then if he is given something he takes it.

Similarly, it is related that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said, "When one of you decides to join a military expedition and then Allah provides him with supplies, there is no harm, but when he is refused a dirham he remains at home, then there is no good in that."

Similarly, al-Awzāʿī said, "If the warrior's intention is the military expedition, then I do not see any harm in it. The same is said of someone who takes something for the Ḥajj so that he might go on the Ḥajj with it either for himself or for someone else." It has been narrated that Mujāhid said that the Ḥajj of the camels' attendants [who accompany the party to look after their camels], the Ḥajj of someone employed [perhaps to accompany someone else on Ḥajj], and the Ḥajj of the trader [who trades during the Ḥajj] "are complete, and nothing is deducted from their reward," which is based on the interpretation that their original intention was the Ḥajj rather than the earnings.

As for when the action is originally for the sake of Allah, and later the intention to show off creeps into it, then if it is a transitory thought which he rejects there is no disagreement that it will do him no harm.

If he gives himself up to it, then there is a question as to whether that invalidates his action or whether it does not harm him, and whether he will be rewarded according to his original intention. There is some disagreement among the people of knowledge of the first right-acting generations about that, which Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrate. They both thought that the weightier point of view was that his action is not invalidated because of that and that he will be rewarded because of his former intention, which is the point of view narrated of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and others.

The evidence for this position is taken from something Abū Dāwūd narrated among his *mursal* hadith from ʿAṭā' al-Khurasānī that, "A man asked, 'Messenger of Allah, all of Banī Salamah fight. Some of them fight for the sake of the world, some fight out of valour, and some of them fight out of desire for the face of Allah, so which of them are martyrs (*shahīd*)?' He said, 'Each one of them, if his original intention is that the word of Allah should be the uppermost.'"[60]

Ibn Jarīr mentioned that this disagreement is only with respect to actions whose ends are closing connected to their beginnings such as *ṣalāh*, fasting

and Ḥajj, but as for those where there is no direct connection such as recitation, *dhikr*, spending money and spreading knowledge, then they are cut off when the intention to show off occurs and renewal of the intention is needed. In that respect it has been narrated that Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd al-Hāshimī said, "Often I narrate a hadith for which I have an intention, but when I come to part of it, my intention changes, so that one hadith requires many intentions." This does not negate *jihād*, as is clear from the *mursal* hadith of ʿAṭā' al-Khurasānī, because *jihād* becomes obligatory when one is present in the ranks [of the fighting men] and it is not permitted to abandon it at that moment, so it becomes like the Ḥajj.[61]

As for when someone does an action purely for Allah and then later Allah creates praise in the hearts of the *mu'minūn* for that act of his, and he rejoices in the bounty of Allah and His mercy and is happy for that, it will not harm him at all. There is the hadith of Abū Dharr from the Prophet ﷺ to this purport, that he asked about a man who does a good action for the sake of Allah and for which people praise him, and so he said, "That is an early bringer of good tidings to the *mu'min*." Muslim and Ibn Mājah narrated it[62] and he

[Ibn Mājah] had [the wording], “A man does an action for the sake of Allah for which people love him,” and it was in this sense that Imam Aḥmad, Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh, Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī and others interpreted it.

Similarly, there is the hadith which at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what about a man who does an action which he keeps a secret, and then when it is discovered he is pleased with that?’ He said, ‘He has two rewards: the reward for [his having kept it] secret and the reward for [its becoming] public.’”[63]

We will confine ourselves to this amount of discussion on sincerity and showing off, because it is enough.

In summary, how excellent are the words of Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh at-Tustarī, “There is nothing harder on the self than *ikhlāṣ* (doing something purely for the sake of Allah), because it has no portion from it.”

Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn ar-Rāzī said, “The most difficult thing in the world is *ikhlāṣ*. How I struggle to remove showing off from my heart and it is as if it grows in it again with other colours.”

Ibn ʿUyaynah said, “One of the supplications of Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh was, ‘O Allah, I ask Your

forgiveness for that of which I repented to You and then returned to it. I seek Your forgiveness for that which I imposed on myself for Your sake and then did not fulfil it for You. I seek forgiveness for that which I claimed that I intended for Your face and then my heart mixed in with it that which You know.'"

SECTION [*on intention according to the meaning used by the people of fiqh*]

As for the meaning of intention which the people of *fiqh* use to distinguish acts of worship from ordinary everyday acts, and to distinguish one act of worship from another, because withholding oneself from eating and drinking is sometimes employed as a prophylactic measure for the protection of health, and sometimes because of an inability to eat, and sometimes in order to give up the appetites for the sake of Allah ﷻ and so fasting requires an intention to distinguish it from these other reasons for giving up food.

Other acts of worship are similar in that respect, such as *ṣalāh* and fasting, of which some are obligatory and some optional. There are a number of different obligations. The obligatory prayers are five every day and night, but different fasts can be obligatory:

Ramaḍān, a fast for expiating a serious wrong action, and for a vow which one failed to fulfil, and these are only distinguished by the intention. Similarly, *ṣadaqah* may be optional or obligatory. That which is obligatory is the *zakāh*. There is also that which is for expiation of a serious wrong action. These are only distinguished from each other by intention, all of which is comprised generally in his words ﷺ "And there is only for each man that which he intends."

There are well known differences among the people of knowledge about some of the above. For example, one of them did not require that someone have a specific intention for the obligatory prayer, but on the contrary it was enough for him that one intend the obligatory prayer of the moment even if he doesn't have the name of the prayer present in his consciousness at that time. This is narrated as the view of Imam Aḥmad. Based on that statement whoever misses a prayer from the day or the night and forgets which one it is must make up three prayers, the dawn prayer [a two *rakʿah* prayer], the sunset prayer [a three *rakʿah* prayer] and any one of the four *rakʿah* prayers.

Similarly, a group of the people of knowledge took the position that the fast of Ramaḍān also does not require a specific intention but that it is sufficient merely to have the intention to fast since the time [the month of Ramaḍān] is not appropriate for any other fast. This is also narrated of Imam Aḥmad. It is often narrated from some of them that the fast of Ramaḍān does not require an intention at all because of its specific nature, so that in that way it is like returning deposits. It has been told about al-Awzāʿī that the *zakāh* is like that too, and one of them interpreted his words to mean that it is sufficient to have the intention of *ṣadaqah* as [in the case of] the Ḥajj. Similarly, Abū Hanifah said, "Even if someone were to give the entire *niṣāb*[64] without any intention it would discharge his obligation of zakāh."

It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ heard a man calling out the *talbiyah*[65] for the Ḥajj for [some other] man, and so he asked him, "Have you done the Ḥajj for yourself?" He said, "No." He said, "This one is for you, then later perform the Ḥajj for the [other] man." Some things have been said concerning the soundness of this hadith, but in fact it is sound from Ibn ʿAbbās and others.[66] Ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad in what is

well known of him, and others passed judgement based on it, that [the single obligatory] Ḥajj of Islam is discharged by having the intention of Ḥajj whether one intends it as an optional and voluntary act, or any other intention, and that a specific intention is not a precondition of the Ḥajj. That means that someone who performs the Ḥajj on behalf of another person and has not done it himself, then that Ḥajj is reckoned as his. It is similar if he performs Ḥajj because of a vow or as an optional act and he has not performed the [single obligatory] Ḥajj of Islam, then it is transformed into it. It is well established that the Prophet ﷺ told his Companions during the Farewell Ḥajj after they had begun it with him and had done the *ṭawāf*[67] and the *saʿy*[68] that they should cancel their Ḥajj and make it an *ʿUmrah*.[69] Some of them were performing the form of Ḥajj called *qirān*[70], and others the form called *ifrād*[71] so that their *ṭawāf* on arrival was just a *ṭawāf* of arrival[72] and not an obligatory ṭawāf. Yet he told them to regard it as the *ṭawāf* of an *ʿUmrah* which is an obligation [of the *ʿUmrah*]. Imam Aḥmad then judged on the basis of that in cancelling Ḥajj and he acted according to it, which is problematic in principle for it makes it obligatory to make a specific intention for the

obligatory *ṭawāf* for the Ḥajj and *ʿUmrah*, and most of the people of *fiqh* disagree with him on that, including Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī and Abū Ḥanīfah.

Imam Aḥmad made a distinction between *ṭawāf* in the state of iḥrām[73] being transformed, such as the *ṭawāf* which is cancelled and made into an *ʿUmrah* so that the *ṭawāf* is transformed in accordance with the transformation of his *iḥrām* just as the *ṭawāf* in the *iḥrām* which he had intended as an optional act while he still owed the [single obligatory] Ḥajj of Islam is transformed [into the Ḥajj of Islam] in accordance with the transformation of his *iḥrām* from its original [purpose], and its then standing in place of his obligatory [Ḥajj]. This is different from the case when he performs the *ṭawāf* for visiting [the Kaʿbah] or with the intention of taking leave or as an optional act, because these would not discharge his duty since he did not intend the obligation and they would not be transformed into an obligation in accordance to the transformation of his iḥrām, and Allah knows best.

Something that is related to this section is that a man at the time of the Prophet ﷺ had given his *ṣadaqah* to another man. The son of the man who had given the *ṣadaqah* went and took it from the recipient.

His father came to know of that and took his dispute with his son to the Prophet ﷺ saying, “I did not intend [to give it to] you!” The Prophet ﷺ said to the man who had given the *ṣadaqah*, “You have what you intended,” and he said to the one who had taken it, “You have what you took.” Al-Bukhārī narrated it.[74]

Imam Aḥmad based himself upon this hadith and acted by it according to the texts which we have from him about it, even though the majority of his companions disagreed with him, because the man was only prohibited to give *ṣadaqah* [*zakāh*] to his son for fear that it would merely be from his affection [rather than discharging the duty of purification of his wealth], but since it reached his son without his knowledge of it, affection was not a motive in his giving it, and he and he (the son) was happened to be one of those who, at the same time, could legally accept *ṣadaqah*. For this reason, even if someone gives his *ṣadaqah* to someone whom he thinks is in need but who in reality is not in need then it discharges his duty [to pay the *zakāh*] according to the sound position, since he only gives it to someone whom he believes can legally accept it, and the state of being in

need is something hidden about which it is often difficult to discover the truth.

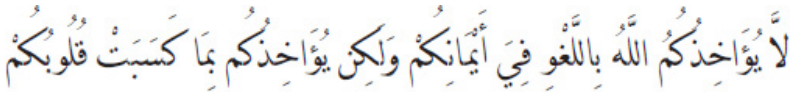
As for purification, the disagreement about the stipulation of an intention for it is well known, which derives from the question of whether purification for the prayer is a separate act of worship or just one of the preconditions of the prayer, like removal of impurities and covering the private parts. Those who do not stipulate that there should be an intention do so because they consider it to be just like the other preconditions of the prayer. Those who stipulate that there should be an intention do so because they regard it as an independent act of worship, and because if it is an act of worship in itself, then it is not valid without an intention. This is the position of the majority of the people of knowledge, and proof of the soundness of that is the overwhelming majority of authentic sources from the Prophet ﷺ that state that, "*Wuḍū*' expiates wrong actions and errors, and that whoever does *wuḍū*' as it is commanded then it is an expiation for his wrong actions."[75]

This indicates that the *wuḍū*' which is commanded in the Qur'ān is itself an independent act of worship, since one of its consequences is expiation of wrong

actions, and because *wuḍū'* without an intention does not expiate any wrong actions, about which there is total agreement, and it is not commanded and the prayer is invalid with it. For this reason, there is nothing in the nature of reward as that which is related about *wuḍū'* for any of the other preconditions of the prayer, such as for the removal of impurities and covering the private parts. Even if someone, as well as intending *wuḍū'*, intends to cool himself and remove impurity or dirt, it fulfils what is required of him according to the texts transmitted from ash-Shāfiʿī, and it is also the position of most of the companions of Aḥmad, because this [extra] purpose is not *ḥarām* or disapproved. For that reason, even if his purpose, along with removing the cause which obviates his *wuḍū'*, is to teach *wuḍū'*, there is no harm. The Prophet ﷺ sometimes used to do the prayer with the purpose of teaching it to people, and similarly the Ḥajj, as he said, "Take your rites from me."[76]

One of the branches of knowledge into which intention enters is cases concerning oaths. The oath which arises from vain and useless talk (*laghw*) does not require expiation, and it [*laghw*] is defined as careless statements without any deep purpose in the

heart, such as the saying, “No, by Allah!” and “Of course, by Allah!” during conversation. Allah, exalted is He, says:



“Allah will not take you to task for inadvertent statements (*laghw*) in your oaths, but He will take you to task for the intention your hearts have made.”[77]

Similarly, in the matters of oaths, one must return, to the intention of the one who swears and his purpose in his oath. If he swears to divorce or to free a slave and then later claims that he intended something other than what the apparent outward sense of his expression conveys, he is believed with respect to that which is between him and Allah ﷻ. As to whether it should be accepted in outward judgement or not, there are two well known positions that the people of knowledge take, both of which are narrated of Aḥmad. It is narrated of ʿUmar that a man was brought to him whose wife had said to him, “Tell me what I am like.” He had said, “You are like a gazelle, or you are like a female pigeon.” She said, “I will not be contented until you say, ‘You are a female camel loosed from the hobbling cord,”[78] and so he said it. ʿUmar said, “Take

her hand, for she is your wife." Abū ʿUbayd narrated it and said, "He meant the female camel which is hobbled, and then it is loosed from its hobbling cord which slips off her and so she is loosed because she had been let loose from it. The man had meant that and so ʿUmar removed the judgement of divorce because that [metaphor and not divorce] had been his intention." He said, "This is the principle for every person who talks in some way which resembles the expressions used in divorce or freeing slaves, whereas he had intended something else. His word is decisive in respect to that which is between him and Allah ﷻ and in outward judgement, according to the interpretation of the school of ʿUmar ﷺ."

It has been narrated that Sumayṭ as-Sadūsī said, "I proposed to a woman and they said to me, 'We will not marry her to you until you divorce your wife.' So I said, 'I divorce her,' three times, and so they married her to me. Then later they realised that my wife was still with me, and they asked, 'Did you not divorce her three times?' I said, 'So-and-so was with me [as my wife] and I divorced her, and so-and-so and I divorced her, but as for this one, I did not divorce her.' Then I went to Shaqīq ibn Thawr, who wanted to go in a

deputation to ʿUthmān, and said to him, ‘Ask the Amīr al-Mu’minīn about this.’ He went and asked him. He (ʿUthmān) said, ‘It is according to his intention.’” Abū ʿUbayd narrated it in *Kitāb aṭ-ṭalāq* “The Book of Divorce” and said that the people of knowledge have a consensus on situations like this.

Isḥāq ibn Mansur said, “I asked Aḥmad, ‘Do you know the hadith of Sumayṭ.’ He said, ‘Yes. As-Sadūsī. He made that his intention, and Shaqīq mentioned it to ʿUthmān who said that it was according to his intention. If the one who had sworn was [in the position of being] the wrongdoer [in the dispute with the other person] and he intended something different from what his adversary made him swear to, then his [alleged] intention is not any use to him.’”

It is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Your oath is according to what your companion believes and affirms.” In another narration of his, “The oath is according to the intention of the one who demands the oath,”[79] and this principle applies to the wrongdoer, but as for someone who has been wronged that [intention] will benefit him.

Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Suwayd ibn Hanẓalah in which he said, “We went out intending to go to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Wā’il ibn Ḥujr was with us. An enemy of his seized him [on the way]. People found it difficult to swear an oath, and so I swore an oath that he was my brother, and so they let him go. We came to the Prophet ﷺ and I told him that the other people had found it difficult to swear an oath and that I had sworn that he was my brother, and he said, ‘You told the truth. A muslim is a muslim’s brother.’”[80]

Similarly, intention is involved in divorce and freeing slaves. If someone expresses words which carry the possible interpretation of divorce or freeing a slave, then he must have an intention. Whether circumstantial indications, such as anger or a request for a divorce, will stand in place of intention or not is something on which there is a very well-known disagreement among the people of knowledge. Similarly, whether the divorce takes place inwardly just as if he had intended it, or whether he is merely obliged with it in outward judgement alone is another thing on which there is a famous difference of opinion. If he brings about the divorce by an open indirect

allusion such as “it is the final decision” and the like, does he cause three divorces or one? There are two well-known different views on that. The clear position of Aḥmad’s *madhhab* is that three divorces take effect by that if his intention is unspecific [to any number], but that if he intends less than three then whatever he intends comes into effect, but there are other narrations from him that in this latter case he is still obliged with three divorces.

Even if someone sees a woman and, thinking her to be his wife, he divorces her and then it becomes clear that she is a stranger, nevertheless, his wife is divorced since he intended to divorce his wife, which Aḥmad stated. It is also said in another narration from him that she is not divorced, which is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī. If it is the opposite, and he sees a woman whom he thinks a stranger and divorces her and then it becomes clear that it is actually his wife, then is she divorced? On this there are two views both of which are narrated from Aḥmad, but the dominant position in the *madhhab* of ash-Shāfiʿī and others is that she is divorced.

If he has two wives one of whom he forbids to go out and then he sees that one of his wives has gone

out and thinks that it is the one whom he forbade, and so says to her, “So and so, did you go out? You are divorced!” Then people of knowledge have differed about it. Al-Ḥasan said, “The one whom he forbade is divorced because it was her he meant.” Ibrāhīm said, “They are both divorced.” ʿAṭā’ said, “Neither of them are divorced.” Aḥmad said, “The one whom he forbade is divorced,” and in one narration, “because he meant to divorce her.” On whether the [wife he actually] addressed is divorced there are also two [differing] narrations from him. The companions [of Aḥmad] differed about the statement that she is divorced, as to whether it is only in legal ruling or also in the inward reality, on which they took two different paths.

It is inferred from his words ﷺ, “Actions are by intentions, and each man has only that which he intends” that contracts and agreements by which someone intends inwardly to reach something *ḥarām* are invalid, such as contracts of sale by which usury and the like are intended, as is the *madhhab* of Mālik, Aḥmad and others, because by this contract he only intends usury and not a sale, “And for each man there is only that which he intends.”

There are very many issues connected to *fiqh* surrounding intention, but in what we have mentioned there is enough. Ash-Shāfiʿī said about this hadith, "It is involved in seventy chapters of *fiqh*," and Allah knows best.

Intention is the purpose of the heart, and it is not necessary to express verbally that which is in the heart in any of the acts of worship. One of the companions of ash-Shāfiʿī narrated that his position was that one must verbally express the intention for the prayer, but meticulous scholars said that he was mistaken. Later *fuqahā*' differ about verbally expressing the intention for the prayer and for other [acts of worship]. Some regard it as desirable, some as disapproved. We do not know of any special narration on these issues from the first right-acting generations except in the case of the Ḥajj alone, because Mujāhid said, "When someone intends the Ḥajj he should name what he is embarking upon." It is also narrated that he said, "He should name it in the *talbiyah*," but this is not the issue we are discussing, because the Prophet ﷺ used to mention his rites in his *talbiyah* saying, "*Labbayk*, *ʿUmrah* and Ḥajj." But our discussion here is on the issue that one says while making the intention for *iḥrām*, "O Allah, I

intend Ḥajj" or "ʿ*Umrah*" which some of the *fuqahā*' regard as preferrable, and about which the words of Mujāhid are not explicitly clear. Most of the right-acting early generations including ʿAṭā', Ṭāwus, al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and an-Nakhaʿī were specific that one should form a detailed intention at the beginning. It is narrated by an authentic path from Ibn ʿUmar that he saw a man while beginning his *iḥrām* saying, "O Allah, I intend Ḥajj and ʿ*Umrah*," and so he asked him, "Are you telling people? Does Allah not know what is in your self?"

Mālik was specific about this, that it is not recommended to name [aloud] that which one intends by one's *iḥrām*. This is narrated by the author of the book *Tahdhīb al-Mudawwanah* who was one of his followers. Abū Dāwūd said, "I asked Aḥmad, 'Before the takbīr [of the prayer] do you say anything?' And he said, 'No.'" This implies that one does not articulate the intention verbally, and Allah, glorious and exalted is He, knows best.

1 Al-Bukhārī (1) and Muslim (1907).

2 All of the hadith mentioned above will follow in this compilation.

3 Possibly “the strangling cord” (*khināq*). By that he may be describing the difficulty of struggling with oneself to make sure one’s actions are with the correct intention and purpose.

4 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 152

5 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 68

6 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 20

7 Sūrat al-Isrā’: 18-19

8 Sūrah Hūd: 15-16

9 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 52

10 Sūrat al-Kahf: 28

11 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 37

12 Sūrat ar-Rūm 38-39

13 Sūrat al-Layl: 20

14 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 264

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 272

16 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 114

17 Ibn Ḥibbān.

18 i.e. they will die in their beds although wanting to die in battle.

19 Aḥmad (1:397).

20 Ibn Mājah (4230). Al-Ḥākim.

21 Ibn Mājah (4229). Also collected by Imam Aḥmad in his *Musnad*. Al-Mundhirī in *at-Targhīb wa’t-tarhīb*.

22 Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā in *al-Ikhlāṣ wa’n-niyyah*.

23 Muslim (2882)

24 Muslim (2884)

25 Aḥmad (5:183), Ibn Mājah (4105). Ibn Ḥibbān.

26 al-Bukhārī (56), and Muslim (1628).

27 *Munqaṭiʿ* is deemed a weak chain of transmission.

28 Sūrat al-Mulk: 2

29 Sūrat al-Kahf: 110

30 Sūrat al-Mumtaḥanah: 10

31 Ibn Jarīr in his *tafsīr* (28:67), al-Ḥārith in his *Musnad*, al-Bazzār in his *Musnad*.

32 According to al-Haythamī in his book *Majmaʿ az-zawā'id*, the narrators are authentic. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar said that the chain of transmission is authentic, and that it is in accordance with the conditions of the two Shaykhs, al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

33 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (9:103) and Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr.

34 Related by the group: al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah.

35 An-Nasā'ī (2:25).

36 Abū Dāwūd (2516), Al-Ḥākim.

37 Al-Ḥākim.

38 Aḥmad (5:234), Abū Dāwūd (2515), an-Nasā'ī (6:49) and in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* (4397), Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (5:220), al-Ḥākim (2435).

39 Abū Dāwūd (2519), al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā* (9:168) and in *ash-Shuʿab* (4264), alḤākim (2437, 2529).

40 Muslim (1905).

41 Sūrah Hūd: 15-16

42 Aḥmad (2:338), Abū Dāwūd (3664) and Ibn Mājah (252).

43 At-Tirmidhī (265).

44 Ibn Mājah (253).

45 Aḥmad (5:134).

46 Sūrat an-Nisā': 141

47 Sūrat al-Māʿūn: 4-6

48 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 47

49 Muslim (2985).

50 Ibn Mājah (4202).

51 Aḥmad (4:125-6).

52 Aḥmad (3:466), at-Tirmidhī (3154), Ibn Mājah (4203). Ibn Ḥibbān.

53 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (1:51), al-Bayhaqī in *ash-Shuʿab* (6836)

54 An-Nasā'ī (3140).

55 Al-Ḥākim (2:111).

56 Sūrat al-Kahf: 105

57 A hadith in which a Follower narrates from the Prophet ﷺ without an intermediary narrator who was a Companion.

58 Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated it.

59 Muslim (1906).

60 Abū Dāwūd in his *Marāsīl* (321).

61 i.e. if the thought to show off occurs to a warrior while he is among the fighting men before the battle, he may not abandon the battle in order to renew his intention, and so his original intention to fight for the sake of Allah is that for which he will be rewarded. Trans.

62 A *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith which Muslim (2642) and Ibn Mājah (4225) narrated.

63 At-Tirmidhī (2384), Ibn Mājah (4226).

64 *Niṣāb*: the minimum portion of held wealth on which *zakāh* is due. Trans.

65 *Labbayk Allāhumma labbayk*... "At Your service O Allah, at Your service..."

66 Abū Dāwūd (1811), Ibn Mājah (2903), Abū Yaʿlā (2440), Ibn Khuzaymah (3039), Ibn Ḥibbān (3988) and others collected it.

67 *Ṭawāf*: circumambulation around the Kaʿbah. Trans.

68 *Saʿy*: going between between Ṣafā and Marwah. Trans.

69 Al-Bukhārī (1598), and Muslim (1213) from Jābir ﷺ.

70 *Qirān*: Ḥajj and ʿUmrah combined. Trans.

71 *Ifrād*: Ḥajj performed alone. Trans.

72 Like the two *rakʿahs* for greeting the mosque. Trans.

73 To be in the state of *iḥrām* is the prerequisite of Ḥajj and ʿ*Umrah*. It involves doing a *ghusl*, donning the two cloths, praying two *rakʿahs* and making the intention for Ḥajj and/or ʿ*Umrah* at or before the *mīqāt*. The rules of Ḥajj or ʿ*Umrah* apply once the *iḥrām* is completed.

74 Al-Bukhārī (1422).

75 Al-Bukhārī (158), Muslim (226) from ʿUthmān ﷺ, and in other collections.

76 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (1297) from Jābir ﷺ.

77 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 225

78 Both *khaliyyah* "a female camel loosed from the hobbling cord" and *ṭāliq* "a she camel not having her fore shank and arm bound together" also mean "divorced". Trans.

79 Muslim (1653).

80 Ibn Mājah (2119), Aḥmad (4:79).

الحديث الثاني

عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ ﷺ قَالَ: بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ؛ إِذْ طَلَعَ عَلَيْنَا رَجُلٌ شَدِيدُ بَيَاضِ الثِّيَابِ، شَدِيدُ سَوَادِ الشَّعْرِ، لاَ يُرَى عَلَيْهِ أَثَرُ السَّفَرِ، وَلاَ يَعْرِفُهُ مِنَّا أَحَدٌ؛ حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، فَأَسْنَدَ رُكْبَتَيْهِ إِلَى رُكْبَتَيْهِ، وَوَضَعَ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى فَخِذَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ! أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الإِسْلاَمِ.

فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿ الإِسْلاَمُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللهِ، وَتُقِيمَ الصَّلاَةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلاً ﴾، قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ، قَالَ: فَعَجِبْنَا لَهُ يَسْأَلُهُ، وَيُصَدِّقُهُ.

قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الإِيمَانِ، قَالَ: ﴿ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللهِ، وَمَلاَئِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ، وَرُسُلِهِ، وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ ﴾، قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ.

قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الإِحْسَانِ، قَالَ: ﴿ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ ﴾.

قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ السَّاعَةِ، قَالَ: ﴿ مَا الْمَسْئُولُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ ﴾.

قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنْ أَمَارَتِهَا، قَالَ: ﴿ أَنْ تَلِدَ الأَمَةُ رَبَّتَهَا، وَأَنْ تَرَى الْحُفَاةَ الْعُرَاةَ الْعَالَةَ رِعَاءَ الشَّاءِ يَتَطَاوَلُونَ فِي الْبُنْيَانِ.

ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَ، فَلَبِثْتُ مَلِيًّا، ثُمَّ قَالَ لِي: ﴿ يَا عُمَرُ! أَتَدْرِي مَنِ السَّائِلُ؟ ﴾ قُلْتُ: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، قَالَ: ﴿ فَإِنَّهُ جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، أَتَاكُمْ يُعَلِّمُكُمْ دِينَكُمْ ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Islam, *Īmān* and *Iḥsān*

ʿUmar ﷺ also said, “While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one day a man came up to us whose clothes were extremely white, whose hair was extremely black, upon whom no traces of travelling could be seen, and whom none of us knew, until he sat down close to the Prophet ﷺ and then rested his knees upon his knees and placed his two hands upon his thighs and said, ‘Muḥammad, tell me about Islam.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Islam is that you witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and establish the prayer, and give the *zakāh*, and fast Ramaḍān, and perform the Ḥajj of the House if you are able to take a way to it.’ He said, ‘You have told the truth,’ and we were amazed at him asking him and [then] telling him that he told the truth. He said, ‘Tell me about *īmān*.’ He said, ‘That you believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and that you believe in the Decree, the good of it and the bad of it.’ He said, ‘You have told the truth.’

He said, ‘Tell me about *iḥsān*.’ He said, ‘That you worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you don’t see Him, truly He sees you.’ He said, ‘Tell me about the Hour.’ He said, ‘The one asked about it knows no more than the one asking.’ He said, ‘Then tell me about its tokens.’ He said, ‘That the female slave should give birth to her mistress, and you see poor, naked, barefoot shepherds of sheep and goats competing in making tall buildings.’ He went away, and I remained some time. Then he [the Prophet ﷺ] asked, ʿUmar, do you know who the questioner was?’ I said, ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ He said, ‘He was Jibrīl who came to you to teach you your *dīn*’.” Muslim narrated it.[1]

Muslim alone narrated this hadith, not al-Bukhārī. He narrated it by way of Kahmas from ʿAbdullāh ibn Buraydah from Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿmar who said, “The first to speak about the Decree in Baṣra was Maʿbad al-Juhanī. I and Humayd ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Ḥimyarī went on Ḥajj or *ʿUmrah* saying [to ourselves], ‘If we meet anyone of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ we will ask him about what these people say about the Decree.’ We were fortunate to meet ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ as he entered

the mosque. We went in shoulder to shoulder with him, I and my companion, one on his right and the other on his left. I thought my companion would delegate the talking to me and so I said, ʻAbū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, people have appeared among us who recite the Qur'ān and seek out and follow knowledge...'" and he told some of their story and that they claimed that there is no Decree and that things happen without any prior decree. "He [Ibn ʿUmar] said, 'When you meet those people tell them that I have nothing to do with them and that they are free of me. By the One by Whom ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar swears, if one of them has the like of Uḥud in gold and spends it, Allah will not accept it until he has *īmān* in the Decree!' Then he said, 'My father, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ told me, "While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ..."'" and he mentioned the rest of the hadith completely. Then he [Muslim] narrated it by other paths some of which return to ʿAbdullāh ibn Buraydah and some to Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿmar, and mentioned that in some of their narrations there were things added in and things left out.

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*[2] from Sulaymān at-Taymī from Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿmar, and Muslim had

narrated from this same path but he didn't mention his [Ibn Ḥibbān's] wording of it. In [Ibn Ḥibbān's] wording there is some extra about Islam: he [the Prophet ﷺ] said, "That you perform Ḥajj and the *ʿUmrah*, and that you do *ghusl* for purification from sexual relations, and that you perfect *wuḍū'* [and fast Ramaḍān]." He [Jibrīl] asked, "Then if I do that, am I a Muslim?" He said, "Yes." He [the Prophet ﷺ] said about īmān, "... and that you have *īmān* in the Garden and the Fire and the Scales." He [Jibrīl] asked about it, "Then if I do that, am I a *mu'min*?" He said, "Yes." He ﷺ said at the end of it, "This was Jibrīl who came to you to teach you your *dīn*. Take it from him. By the One in Whose hand is my self, he was never disguised to me since he came to me before this occasion, and [so on this occasion] I did not recognise him until he turned away."

The two of them (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) narrated in the two Ṣaḥīḥ books the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ came out to people and a man came to him and asked, 'What is īmān?' He said, 'Īmān is that you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, the meeting with Him, His Messengers and that you believe in the last rising [from the grave].' He

asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what is Islam?’ He said, ‘Islam is that you worship Allah without associating anything with Him as a partner, establish the obligatory prayer, pay the obligatory *zakāh* and fast Ramaḍān.’ He asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what is *iḥsān*?’ He said, ‘That you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, He sees you.’ He asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, when is the Hour?’ He said, ‘The one asked about it knows no more than the questioner, but I will tell you about its signs: when the female slave gives birth to her lord that is one of its signs. When you see naked barefoot ones becoming the leaders of men, that is one of its signs. When the shepherds of lambs compete in constructing tall buildings that is one of its signs [and it, the Hour, is] among five [things] which none know but Allah,’ and then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَداً وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

‘Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour and sends down abundant rain and knows what is in the womb. And no self knows what it will earn tomorrow and no

self knows in what land it will die. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.'[3]

"Then the man went away and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, 'Bring the man back to me,' and so they went to try and bring him back but saw nothing. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'This was Jibrīl who came to teach people their *dīn*.'"[4]

Muslim narrated it in a more complete form in whose description of *īmān* there is, "That you believe in all of the Decree," and he said about *iḥsān*, "That you fear Allah as if you see Him."[5]

Imam Aḥmad narrated in his *Musnad* the hadith of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ,[6] and also the hadith of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Ibn ʿĀmir or Abū ʿĀmir or Abū Mālik[7] from the Prophet ﷺ and in this version of the hadith there is that he said, "And we heard the replies of the Prophet ﷺ but we could not see the one who was talking to him nor hear his words,"[8] but this is refuted by the hadith of ʿUmar which Muslim narrated which is more sound. The [sense of the] hadith of ʿUmar from the Prophet ﷺ has also been narrated by Anas ibn Mālik, Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Bajalī and others.

It is a hadith of tremendous importance which comprises an explanation of the whole *dīn*. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said at the end of it, "This was Jibrīl who came to you to teach you your *dīn*," after explaining the degree of Islam, the degree of *īmān* and the degree of *iḥsān*, all of which he called '*dīn*'.

The narrations differ as to whether Islam comes first before *īmān* or vice-versa. In the hadith of ʿUmar which Muslim narrated, he began by asking about Islam. In the hadith of at-Tirmidhī[9] and others, he began by asking about *īmān*, as for example in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ؓ. In some of the narrations of the hadith of ʿUmar which Muslim narrated there is that he asked about iḥsān between Islam and *īmān*.

As for Islam, the Prophet ﷺ explained it as the outward actions of the limbs such as words and deeds, the first of which is witnessing [*shahādah*] that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, which is an action of the tongue. Then there is establishing the prayer, paying *zakāh*, fasting Ramaḍān and Ḥajj of the House for whoever is able to take a way to it.

They divide into physical actions such as prayer and fasting; actions involving wealth, which is giving

the *zakāh*; and one compounded of both of them such as the Ḥajj with respect to those who are far away from Makkah.[10] In the narration of Ibn Ḥibbān[11] he added to that the performance of *ʿUmrah*, *ghusl* from sexual intercourse or emission, and completing *wuḍū'*, which draws our attention to the fact that all of the outward duties comprise that which is named Islam. But we only mention here the fundamental actions of Islam on which it is based, as the commentary of that will come in the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar,"Islam is built on five"[12] in its place, if Allah wills, exalted is He.

His words in one of the narrations, "'Then if I do that will I be a Muslim?' He said, 'Yes.'" These show that whoever completes his performance of the five pillars of Islam has really become a Muslim, along with the fact that whoever affirms the two *shahādahs* has legally become a Muslim. If someone enters Islam by that means, he is bound to undertake the establishment of the rest of the characteristics of Islam. Whoever leaves out the two *shahādahs* has gone out of Islam. There is a well-known disagreement among people of knowledge as to whether someone's abandoning the prayer means that he has gone out of Islam, and similarly with respect to all the rest of the

five pillars of Islam, which we will mention in its appropriate place, if Allah wills, exalted is He.

One of the things which show that all outward actions are comprised under the name Islam are his words ﷺ, "The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe."[13] In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ؓ that a man asked the Prophet ﷺ "Which part of Islam is the best?" He said, "That you feed [people] food and greet with the greeting of peace whomever you recognise and whomever you do not recognise."[14]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim there is from Abū Hurayrah ؓ from the Prophet ﷺ, that he said, "Islam has signs and waymarks of guidance like those of the roads, of which there is that you should worship Allah without associating anything with Him, establish the prayer, produce *zakāh*, fast Ramaḍān, command the well-recognised virtues and forbid the repudiated vices, and that you greet the descendants of Adam when you meet them, and greet your family when you enter where they are. Whoever is deficient in anyone of them in any way, then it is a portion of Islam which he has left out. Whoever leaves out [all of] them has cast Islam behind his back."[15]

Ibn Mardawayh narrated the hadith of Abu'd-Dardā' ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Islam has radiant light and marks like the waymarks on the road. The head of them and the one which encompasses them is the witnessing that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger, [then there is] the establishment of prayer, the production of *zakāh*, completion of *wuḍū'*, judging by the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, obeying those charged with governance, greeting each other and greeting your families when you enter your houses, and greeting the descendants of Adam whenever you meet them."[16] There is weakness in its chain of transmission, and perhaps it is *mawqūf*.[17]

There is a sound hadith from Abū Isḥāq from Ṣilah ibn Zufar from Ḥudhayfah ﷺ that he said, "Islam has eight portions: Islam is a portion, prayer is a portion, *zakāh* is a portion, Ḥajj of the House is a portion, *jihād* is a portion, fasting Ramaḍān is a portion, commanding the well-recognised virtues is a portion, and forbidding the repudiated vices is a portion, and whoever has no portion has failed."[18] Al-Bazzār narrated it as a *marfūʿ*[19] hadith but it is more authentic to say that it is *mawqūf* statement.

Someone narrated it from Abū Isḥāq from al-Ḥārith from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ and that was narrated by Abū Yaʿlā al-Mawṣilī and others. However, it is more authentic that it is a saying of Ḥudhayfah's, and that was the position ad-Dāraquṭnī and others took.

When he said, "Islam is a portion" he meant the two *shahādahs* because they are the sign of Islam by which a person becomes a Muslim. Similarly, leaving those things which are forbidden is also comprised under the name 'Islam', as it has been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "A part of the excellence of a man's Islam is his leaving what does not concern him." That will come in its proper place, if Allah wills, exalted is He.

What also demonstrates that is that which Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and an-Nasā'ī narrated from the hadith of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah strikes a similitude: a straight path and on its two sides are two walls in which there are open doors and over the doors are loose curtains. At the door of the path there is a crier saying, 'People! Enter the path, all of you! And do not deviate.' There is a crier calling out above the path. Whenever anyone

intends to open any of those doors, he says, ‘Woe to you! Do not open it, for if you open it you will enter it.’ The path is Islam, the two walls are the limits of Allah ﷻ the open doors are what Allah has forbidden, that crier at the beginning of the path is the Book of Allah, and the crier above the path is the admonisher of Allah in the heart of every Muslim.”[20] At-Tirmidhī added to it:

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

“Allah calls to the Abode of Peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path.”[21]

In this metaphor which the Prophet ﷺ struck, there is that Islam is the straight path upon which Allah, exalted is He, has ordered us to go straight, and has forbidden that we exceed its limits, and that whoever commits any of the things which are forbidden has crossed over its limits.

As for *īmān*, the Prophet ﷺ explained it in this hadith as inward beliefs, saying, “That you have *īmān* in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Rising after death, and that you have *īmān* in the Decree, the good of it and the bad of it.” Allah has

mentioned *īmān* in His Book with these five fundamental principles in many places, such as in His words, exalted is He:

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ

"The Messenger has *īmān* in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and so do the *mu'minūn*. Each one has *īmān* in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers. We do not differentiate between any of His Messengers."[22]

And He says, exalted is He:

وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ

"Rather, those with true devoutness are those who have *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets."[23]

And He says, exalted is He:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

“Those who have *īmān* in the Unseen and establish *ṣalāh* and give of what We have provided for them; those whohave *īmān* inwhat hasbeen sentdown to you and what was sent down before you, and are certain about the *ākhirah*.”[24]

Īmān in the Messengers requires that one believes in everything of which they have informed us: the angels, the prophets, the Book, the Rising and the Decree, and other things of the details of which they have informed us like the attributes of Allah, exalted is He, and the attributes of the Last Day, such as the *Ṣirāṭ*,[25] the Scales [for weighing deeds], the Garden and the Fire.

Included in *īmān* in the Decree is *īmān* in the good of it and the bad of it. Because of this phrase Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ narrated this hadith as a proof against whoever repudiates the Decree and claims that things happen for the first time without a prior decree from Allah ﷻ. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar was tough with them and absolved himself of any connection to them, and he said that their actions would not be acceptable without belief in the Decree.

Belief in the Decree has two degrees: first, belief that Allah, exalted is He, has prior knowledge of what

good and evil the slaves do, their obedience and disobedience, before creating them and bringing them into existence, knowing who of them are people of the Garden and who of them are for the Fire. He created reward and punishment for them as recompense for their actions before creating them and making them be, and He wrote that down with Him and recorded it, and the slaves' actions run according to what is previously in His knowledge and in His Book.[26]

The second degree is that Allah, exalted is He, created all of the slaves' actions, good and bad, *kufr, īmān*, obedience and disobedience, and willed them for them. This is the degree which the people of the Sunnah and of the Community[27] affirm, but which the people of free-will[28] reject and deny. The first degree is affirmed by many of the people of free-will, although their extremists such as Maʿbad al-Juhanī – the one about whose words Ibn ʿUmar was asked – ʿAmr ibn ʿUbayd and others, deny it.

Many of the imams of the first right-acting generations said, "Reason with the people of free-will about [Allah's] knowledge, and if they affirm it they have been defeated, and if they reject [Allah's prior knowledge] they have become *kuffār*," meaning that

whoever negates the prior and pre-time knowledge [that Allah has] of the slaves' actions and that Allah, exalted is He, apportioned them before creating them to be those who are grievous [in that their end is the Fire] and those who are happy [in that their end is the Garden], and that He wrote that down with Him in a well-protected Book, then they have denied the Qur'ān and thus become *kuffār*. If they affirm it and yet deny that Allah creates the slaves' actions and wills them from them with decreeing cosmic will then they have been defeated, because that which they affirm is a proof against them in this denial of theirs. In attributing *kufr* to them there is a well-known disagreement among the people of knowledge.

As for someone who denies the pre-existent knowledge [of Allah], then both ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad took the position that he is a *kāfir*, as did other imams of Islam.

If someone says [in objection] that the Prophet ﷺ made a distinction in this hadith between Islam and *īmān*, and regarded all actions as a part of Islam but not of *īmān*, whereas the well known position of the right-acting first generations and the people of hadith is that *īmān* is word, deed and intention, and that all

actions are comprised under *īmān*. Ash-Shāfiʿī recounted that that was the consensus of the Companions and the Followers and those after them who had reached them.

The first right-acting generations strenuously rejected whoever excludes deeds from *īmān*. Some of those who rejected and repudiated that and regarded it as an innovated phrase were Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Maymūn ibn Mihrān, Qatādah, Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī, Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī, az-Zuhrī, Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr and others. Ath-Thawrī said, "It is an innovated view, and we found people [before us] holding another view." Al-Awzāʿī said, "Those of the right-acting first generations who preceded us did not make any distinction between action and *īmān*."

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz wrote to the people of the outlying provinces: "*Īmān* has obligations, legal matters, [limits] and sunnahs such that whoever completes them has completed *īmān*, and whoever does not complete them has not completed *īmān*." This is mentioned by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Someone said, "The matter is as he said."

What shows that actions are a part of *īmān* is His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا

"The *mu'minūn* are those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, whose *īmān* is increased when His Signs are recited to them, and who put their trust in their Lord; those who establish *ṣalāh* and give of what We have provided for them. They are in truth the *mu'minūn*."[29]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said to the deputation from ʿAbd al-Qays, "I order you to do four things: have *īmān* in Allah, and do you know what *īmān* in Allah is? [It is] witnessing that there is no god but Allah, establishing the prayer, producing the *zakāh*, fasting Ramaḍān, and giving the fifth of the booty."[30]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "*Īmān* is more than sixty," or, "more than sixty branches, the best of which is the saying, 'There is no god but Allah,' and the least of which is removing something that would cause harm from the road. And modesty is a branch of *īmān*."[31] The wording is taken from Muslim.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The adulterer does not commit adultery when he does so while being a *mu’min*, nor does the one who drinks wine do so while he is a *mu’min*. The thief does not steal when he does so while being a *mu’min*.”[32] If leaving these great wrong actions does not come under the name ‘īmān’ he would not have rejected the application of the term ‘īmān’ to the one who does any of these things, because the term is only denied because of absence of the elements of that which is named [by the term] or its requirements.

As for the way to reconcile these sources with the hadith of the questioning of Jibrīl ﷺ about Islam and *īmān*, and the distinctions the Prophet ﷺ made between them, and his including actions under Islam rather than under *īmān*, it becomes clear by the determination of a principle, which is that some names comprise many named things when they are used by themselves and unrestrictedly. However, when that name is paired with another then it comes to designate only some of those named things while the name which is coupled with it designates the rest of them, for example, the nouns ‘*faqīr* – poor, needy’ and

‘*miskīn* – bereft’. If either one is used singly it designates all those who are in need, but if one is used along with the other then one of the two designates a category of those who are in need and the other designates the rest of them. It is similar with the terms Islam and *īmān*. If one of the terms is used alone it comprises the meanings of the other, and by being used singly it designates what the other would designate if used singly. If they are coupled one of them designates only some of that which it would designate if used singly, and the other designates the rest.

A group of the imams have stated this clearly. Abū Bakr al-Ismāʿīlī said in his letter to the people of the mountain: “Many of the people of the Sunnah and the Community (*jamāʿah*) say that *īmān* is word and deed, and that Islam is doing that which Allah has made obligatory for the human to do, in the case where the two terms are mentioned coupled. So it is said that the ‘*mu’minūn*’ and the ‘*muslimūn*’ together each takes a particular meaning, so that what is meant by one of them is not what is meant by the other, but that if one of the two terms is mentioned it comprises everything

and is generally true of all of them [the Muslims or the *mu'minūn*]."

Al-Khaṭṭābī also mentions this sense in his book *Maʿālim as-sunan* "Waymarks of the Sunnahs", and a group of the people of knowledge afterwards emulated him in that. What indicates the correctness of that is that the Prophet ﷺ explained the term *īmān* when he mentioned it by itself, in the hadith about the deputation of ʿAbd al-Qays, in the same way that he explained Islam when conjoined to *īmān* in the hadith about Jibrīl. In another hadith he explained Islam in the same way as he had explained *īmān*, as it is reported in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah that he said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, 'Messenger of Allah, what is Islam?' He said, 'That you surrender your heart to Allah, and that the muslims are safe from your tongue and your hand.' He asked, 'Which [part of] Islam is better? He said, '*Īmān*.' He asked, 'What is *īmān*?' He said, 'That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Rising after death.' He asked, 'What [part of] *īmān* is better?' He answered, 'Emigration (*hijrah*).' He asked, 'What is emigration?' He replied, 'Thatyougiveupevil.' He asked, 'Which

[typeof] emigration is better?' He said, '*Jihād*.'"[33] The Prophet ﷺ said that *īmān* is the best part of Islam and included actions within it.

By this detailed statement, the exact determination of the meaning of the statement as to whether *īmān* and Islam are one thing or two different things becomes clear.

The people of the Sunnah and of the hadith differ on it, and they have compiled numerous works about it. Some of them claim that the majority of the people of the Sunnah agree that they are one thing, among them Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, and this position has been narrated by Ayyūb ibn Suwayd ar-Ramlī as that of Sufyān ath-Thawrī, but Ayyūb has some weakness [as a narrator]. Some say, among them Abū Bakr ibn as-Samʿānī and others, that the people of the Sunnah make a distinction between the two. This distinguishing between the two is narrated of many of the right-acting first generations, for example Qatādah, Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind, Abū Jaʿfar al-Bāqir, az-Zuhrī, Ḥammād ibn Zayd, Ibn Mahdī, Sharīk, Ibn Abī Dhi'b, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Abū Khaythamah, Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn and others, although there exist disagreements among them as to the nature

of the difference between them [Islam and *Īmān*]. Al-Ḥasan and Ibn Sīrīn used to say, "[I am a] Muslim," and they would be in awe of using the term, "Mu'min."

By means of the detailed explanation we have mentioned above the [apparent] disagreement is removed, since we are saying that if either term is mentioned by itself then at that time there is no difference between them, but that if the two terms are coupled, then there is a distinction between them.

The exact nature of the difference between them is that *īmān* is the affirmation of the heart, its confirmation, and its recognition, whereas Islam is the surrender of the slave to Allah, his humility and his compliant submission, which is expressed in actions, and that is the *dīn*, just as Allah called Islam '*dīn*' in His Book. In the hadith of Jibrīl, the Prophet ﷺ called Islam, *īmān* and *iḥsān* '*dīn*'. This is another clear indication that when one of the two terms is used singly it includes [the meanings of] the other, and that a distinction is only made between them when one of the two terms is coupled with the other, at which time what is meant by *īmān* is everything that comprises

affirmation from the heart, and by Islam everything that comprises action.

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Anas ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Islam is public, whereas *īmān* is in the heart.”[34] That is because actions are manifest publicly, and affirmation,[35] which is in the heart, does not become manifest. The Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication when performing the prayer over the dead:

اَللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ

“O Allah, whomever of us you make to live, let him live in Islam, and whomever of us you make to die, let him die in *īmān*,”[36] because deeds are done by the limbs which one is only able to do while alive. Then, at death, nothing remains but the heart’s affirmation.

From this the people of knowledge who ascertain the fine details of knowledge say that every *mu’min* is a Muslim, because whoever has real *īmān* and it becomes firmly established in his heart will undertake the actions of Islam, as he said ﷺ “Certainly, in the body there is a morsel of flesh, which if it is sound then the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt. Certainly it is the heart.” If the

heart makes *īmān* a reality then the limbs proceed to the actions of Islam.

[However], not every Muslim is a *mu'min*, since perhaps *īmān* may be weak so that the heart does not realise it completely, along with the limbs' performance of the actions of Islam. Thus, such a person is a Muslim but he is not a *mu'min* with a complete *īmān*, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُل لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَٰكِن قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

"The desert Arabs say, 'We have *īmān*.' Say: 'You do not have *īmān*. Say rather, "We have become Muslim," for *īmān* has not yet entered into your hearts.'"[37]

They were not complete hypocrites according to the more authentic of the two interpretations, the statement of Ibn ʿAbbās and others, but their *īmān* was weak, which is indicated by His words, exalted is He:

وَإِن تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُم مِّنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا

"If you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not undervalue your actions in any way."[38]

This means that, “He will not deprive you of anything of your rewards,” which shows they had enough *īmān* for their actions to be accepted.

Similarly, there are the words of the Prophet ﷺ to Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ when he [Saʿd] asked him, “Why did you not give to so-and-so when he is a *mu’min*?” and the Prophet ﷺ said, “Or a Muslim?”[39] indicating that he had not realised the station of *īmān* but was only in the station of outward Islam. There is no doubt that whenever inward *īmān* is weak it necessarily follows that outward actions will be weak as well, but use of the term *īmān* is precluded for whoever leaves out any of his duties, just as in his words, “The adulterer does not commit adultery when he does while being a *mu’min*.”

The people of the Sunnah differ over whether such a person is termed “a *mu’min* with a shortcoming in his *īmān*” or whether he is said not to be a *mu’min* but a Muslim, according to two distinct positions both of which are narrated from Aḥmad.

As for the term Islam, its use is not precluded because of a person’s failure with respect to some of his duties or his undertaking some of the things which are forbidden, but it is only precluded if he does

something that negates it completely. There is nothing known in the authentic Sunnah which implies that someone who gives up one of Islam's requirements is not a Muslim, in the way that use of the term *īmān* is precluded for someone who gives up any of its requirements, even though the term *kufr* has been used categorically for doing some of those things which are forbidden, and similarly hypocrisy has also been used categorically.

The people of knowledge differ as to whether someone who perpetrates one of the major wrong actions (*kabā'ir*) is called a *kāfir* with a lesser *kufr* or a hypocrite with a lesser hypocrisy, but I know of none of them who permit the unqualified negation of the application of the term Islam to such a person [i.e. to say that he is not a Muslim], except for what is narrated that Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said, "The one who gives up *zakāh* is not a Muslim,"[40] and it is possible that because of that he regarded him as a *kāfir* who had gone out of Islam.

Similarly, it is narrated of ʿUmar about people who are able to do the Ḥajj but do not do it, that they are not Muslims, and the apparent outward meaning is that he believed that they are *kuffār*. So for that reason

he wanted to impose the *jizyah* tax on them, saying, "They haven't yet entered into Islam, and they continue in their condition of being people of the Book." Since it has become clear that use of the term Islam is not precluded except because of the existence of something which precludes it [Islam] and which removes someone entirely from the *dīn*, then if the term Islam is used unrestrictedly or paired with some praise it also includes all of *īmān*, affirmation and everything else, as we saw before in the hadith of ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah.

An-Nasā'ī narrated the hadith of ʿUqbah ibn Mālik that, "The Prophet ﷺ sent a raiding party which attacked some people, one man of whom said, 'I am a Muslim,' and whom one of the raiding party then killed. The story was told to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who spoke to him severely. The man said, 'The man only said it seeking refuge from being killed.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Allah refused me to kill a *mu'min*,' three times."[41] If it were not that the unqualified use of the term Islam comprises *īmān* and affirmation of the five principles, one who said 'I am a Muslim' would not become a *mu'min* by simply saying these

words. Allah, exalted is He, told us that the Queen of Saba entered Islam with these words:

رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

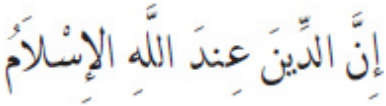
"My Lord, I have wronged myself but I have submitted with Sulaymān to the Lord of all the worlds."[42]

He told us that Yūsuf ﷺ supplicated that he should die in Islam, all of which shows that Islam used unqualifiedly comprises everything of affirmation which *īmān* comprises.

In the *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah there is that 'Adi ibn Ḥātim said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'O 'Adi, submit [in Islam] and you will be safe.' I asked, 'What is Islam?' He replied, 'That you witness that there is no god but Allah, and you witness that I am the Messenger of Allah, you believe in the Decrees, all of them, the good of them and the bad of them, those which are sweet and those which are bitter."[43] This is a clear textual proof that *īmān* in the Decree is a part of Islam.

Moreover, the two *shahādahs* are indisputably some of the features of Islam, but it is not meant that one

should merely articulate them without affirming them to be true, so we know that affirmation of them is comprised under Islam. The Islam mentioned in His words, exalted is He:



"The *dīn* with Allah is Islam,"[44] is explained by a party of the right-acting first generations, one of whom is Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn az-Zubayr, as *tawḥīd* and affirmation.

If use of the term *īmān* is precluded for someone whose Islam is established, such as the desert Arabs about whom Allah informs us, then what is precluded is the first establishment of *īmān* in the heart although it is established that he shares in the outward actions of Islam along with a type of *īmān* which renders his actions sound for without this measure of *īmān* he would not be a Muslim. *Īmān* was precluded for [the desert Arabs] because they lacked the tasting of some of its realities and because of shortcomings in some of its requirements. This is based on the fact that *īmān* which is established in the hearts has different degrees, and this is the correct answer and it is also

the most authentic of the two narrations related from Abū ʿAbdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. The *īmān* of the *ṣiddiqūn* [the completely truthful people who unhesitatingly affirm the truth] to whose hearts the Unseen manifests itself so much that it becomes as if direct witnessing, in so much as it does not admit of any kind of doubt, is not the same as the *īmān* of others who have not reached this degree, since if something causes them doubt they come to doubt. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ defined the degree of iḥsān as that the slave should worship and serve his Lord as if he sees him, and this is not obtained by the generality of the *mu'minūn*. One of them said, "Abū Bakr ؓ does not have precedence over you because of a great amount of fasting and prayer, but because of something which settled in his breast."

Ibn ʿUmar ؓ was asked, "Did the Companions ؓ use to laugh?" He said, "Yes, and the *īmān* in their hearts was like mountains." What relationship does this have to those in whose hearts *īmān* weighs as much as the egg of an ant or a seed of barley? Or such as those people from among the people of *tawḥīd* who will emerge from the Fire? These are the ones about

whom one could correctly say, "*Īmān* has not entered into their hearts," because of its feebleness with them.

These issues – I mean the issues of Islam and *īmān, kufr* and hypocrisy – are tremendously important, because Allah ﷻ has connected [eternal] blessed good fortune and [eternal] misery, and proving worthy of the Garden or the Fire, to these terms. The disagreements as to what they designate were the first disagreements to arise in this community, which was the disagreement of the *Khawārij* with the Companions, since they regarded disobedient people who possess *tawḥīd* as entirely out of Islam and counted them as being in the circle of *kufr* and treated them as they would *kuffār*, by which they declared it permissible to shed the blood of Muslims and seize their property. Then after them there arose the opposition of the Muʿtazilah and their assertion of the existence of a station between the two stations [of *īmān* and *kufr*]. Then there arose the disagreements of the Murji'ah and their taking the position that corrupt people are *mu'minūn* with perfect *īmān*.

In both early and later times, the people of knowledge compiled numerous works on these issues. Among those who did so were Imam Aḥmad, Abū

ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah and Muḥammad ibn Aslam aṭ-Ṭūsī from the imams of the right-acting first generations. All groups after them compiled great numbers of works on it. In this I have mentioned some comprehensive points which cover many principles of these issues and the disagreements that there are respecting them, and there is sufficiency in it, if Allah wills.

SECTION[45]

We have already said that actions are comprised under Islam and also under *īmān*, and we mentioned what outward actions of the limbs' that includes. It also includes the inward limbs' actions.

Thus some of the actions of Islam are: to make the *dīn* purely for the sake of Allah, exalted is He, and to be sincere to Him and to His slaves, and guard the heart from deceiving or envying them or being spiteful to them and from all the other forms of harm.

Comprised under *īmān* there is the trembling of the hearts at the remembrance of Allah; and their humility at hearing His mention and His Book, and increasing in *īmān* from that; making reliance on Allah ﷻ a reality; fear of Allah secretly and openly; contentment

with Allah as Lord, with Islam as *dīn* and with Muḥammad as Messenger ﷺ; preferring destruction with the greatest types of pain over *kufr*;[46] being conscious of Allah's nearness to the slave and perpetually calling Him to mind; preferring the love of Allah and His Messenger over the love of everything other than them; love for the sake of Allah and hatred for His sake; giving for His sake and withholding for His sake; making all one's movements and moments of stillness for His sake; generosity towards people in both financial and physical obedience; rejoicing at and finding happiness in one's good actions, and distress at and grief over one's wrong actions; the *mu'minūn's* preferring the Messenger of Allah ﷺ over themselves and their wealth; extreme modesty and good character; loving what one loves for oneself for one's *mu'minūn* brothers; sharing equally with the *mu'minūn* particularly one's neighbours; and supporting and helping them and grieving over what grieves them.

We will mention some of the texts narrated about that:

As for that which is narrated about what the term Islam comprises, there is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad and in an-Nasā'ī that Muʿāwiyah ibn Ḥaydah

said, “I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, by the One Who sent you with the Truth, what did He send you with?’ He answered, ‘Islam.’ I asked, ‘What is Islam?’ He replied, ‘That you should resign your heart to Allah, exalted is He, that you direct your self towards Allah, that you pray the obligatory prayers, and pay the obligatory *zakāh*.’” In a narration of his there is, “I asked, ‘What is the sign of Islam?’ He said, ‘That you should say, “I surrender myself to Allah and confine myself exclusively [to that],” that you establish the prayer and pay the *zakāh*, and [remember that] every Muslim is sacred to a Muslim.’”[47]

In the *Sunan* there is from Jubayr ibn Muṭʿim that the Prophet ﷺ said in his *khuṭbah* in al-Khayf at Mina, “[There are] three [habits] which, [as long as he holds to them], the heart of a Muslim will not become affected by malice or rancour: doing actions purely for the sake of Allah, giving good counsel to those entrusted with the affairs of the Muslims, and clinging to the community of the Muslims, because their supplication encompasses those beyond them.”[48] He informed us that these three things remove malice and rancour from a Muslim’s heart.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ was asked, "Who is the best of the Muslims?" and he replied, "The one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe."[49]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim and so he does not wrong him, forsake him or look down on him. It is sufficient evil for a man that he look down on his Muslim brother. All of the Muslim is sacred for the Muslim: his blood, property and honour."[50]

As for that which is related as being comprised under the term *īmān*, for example, His words:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا

"The *mu'minūn* are those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, whose *īmān* is increased when His Signs are recited to them, and who put their trust in their Lord; those who establish *ṣalāh* and give of what We have provided for them. They are in truth the *mu'minūn*."[51]

And there are His words:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَن تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

"Has the time not arrived for the hearts of those who have *īmān* to yield to the remembrance of Allah and to the truth He has sent down, so they are not like those who were given the Book before for whom the time seemed over long so that their hearts became hard?"[52]

And there are His words:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

"It is in Allah that the *mu'minūn* should put their trust."[53]

And there are His words:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

"Put your trust in Allah if you are *mu'minūn*."[54]

And there are His words:

وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

“Fear Me if you are *mu’minūn*.”[55]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib that the Prophet ﷺ said, “He who is contented with Allah as Lord, with Islam as *dīn*, and with Muḥammad as Messenger has tasted the savour of *īmān*.”[56] Contentment with the lordship of Allah comprises contentment with worshipping Him alone without any partner, and contentment with His managing affairs on behalf of His slave and His choosing for him. Contentment with Islam as *dīn* comprises choosing and preferring it over every other *dīn*. Contentment with Muḥammad as Messenger involves contentment with everything that he brought from Allah and accepting it with surrender and joy, as He says, exalted is He:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا

“No, by your Lord, they are not *mu’minūn* until they make you their judge in the disputes that break out between them, and then find no resistance within themselves to what you decide and submit themselves completely.”[57]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "[There are] three things which whoever has them within him will experience because of them the sweetness of *īmān*: for whomever Allah and His Messenger are more beloved than any other than them; and whoever loves a man only loving him for the sake of Allah; and whoever dislikes returning to *kufr* after Allah had rescued him from it as much as he would dislike being cast into the Fire."[58] In a version of it there is, "He will find by them the savour of *īmān*," and in other versions, "...the savour of *īmān* and its sweetness."

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "None of you have *īmān* until I am more beloved to him than his child, his parent and mankind altogether." In another version there is, "...than his family, his property and mankind altogether."[59]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is that Abū Razīn al-ʿUqaylī asked, "Messenger of Allah, what is *īmān*?" He said, "That you witness there is no god but Allah alone without partner and that Muḥammad is His slave and His Messenger, that Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to you than anything

else, that you prefer being burnt to associating anything with Allah, and that you love people without any kinship [to you] only loving them for the sake of Allah. If you are like that, then the love of *īmān* has already entered your heart as love of water has entered [the heart of] the thirsty person on a scorching hot day." I asked, "Messenger of Allah, how can I know whether I am a *mu'min*?" He answered, "Any of my community – or he said, 'this community' – who does a good deed knowing that it is a good deed and that Allah will recompense him with better for it, or who does a bad action knowing that it is a bad action and so seeks forgiveness of Allah for it, knowing that only Allah can forgive it, is a *mu'min*."[60]

In the *Musnad* and elsewhere there is from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever is pleased by his good actions and grieved at his wrong actions is a *mu'min*."[61]

In the *Musnad* of Baqī ibn Mukhallad there is from a man who heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, "Clear *īmān* is that when you hurt or wrong anyone, your male or female slave, or anybody at all, you fast or give *ṣadaqah*, and that when you do good actions you rejoice."[62]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are three types of *mu’minūn* in the world: those who have *īmān* in Allah and His Messenger and then do not doubt and they struggle with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah; then there is the one whom people trust with their wealth and their lives, and then there is the one who when he is on the point of [achieving] a desire he gives it up for the sake of Allah ﷻ.”[63]

In it also there is that ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah said, “I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what is Islam?’ He answered, ‘Good words, and feeding [people] food.’ I asked, ‘What is *īmān*?’ He replied, ‘Steadfastness and gentle generosity.’ I asked, ‘Which Islam is better?’ He said, ‘[The Islam of] him from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe.’ I asked, ‘Which *īmān* is better?’ He said, ‘Good character.’” Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī explained ‘steadfastness and gentle generosity’ saying, “It is being steadfast [doing] without what Allah has forbidden, and gentle and generous discharge of the obligations of Allah ﷻ.”[64]

In at-Tirmidhī and elsewhere there is from ʿĀ’ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The most perfect of the *mu’minūn* in *īmān* is the best of them in character.”[65]

Abū Dāwūd and others narrate it as a hadith of Abū Hurayrah.[66]

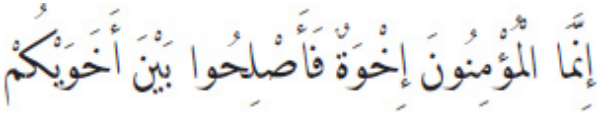
Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad* from the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Muʿāwiyah al-Ghāḍirī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are three things which whoever does them will taste the savour of *īmān*: whoever worships Allah alone because there is no god but Allah, and gives the *zakāh* of his property while he himself is pleased with that, every year..." and at the end of it there is, "So the man asked, 'What is a man's purification of the self, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'That he knows that Allah is with him wherever he is.'"[67] Abū Dāwūd narrated the beginning of the hadith but not the end.[68]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best of *īmān* is that you know that Allah is with you wherever you are."[69]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Modesty is a part of *īmān*."[70]

Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* is just like a camel which has a nose-ring and a

tender nose; wherever he is led he goes submissively."[71] Allah ﷻ says:



"The *mu'minūn* are brothers, so make peace between your brothers."[72]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The simile for the *mu'minūn* in their mutual affection, mercy and kindness is [that they are] like a single body; if a single organ or limb of it has a complaint, the rest of the body collapses in fever and sleeplessness." In Muslim's version, "The *mu'minūn* are like one man."In another version of his, "The Muslims are like a single man; if his eye has a complaint, all of him complains, and if his head has a complaint, all of him complains."[73]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Mūsā ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* with respect to the *mu'min* is like a building part of which strengthens other parts," and he intertwined his fingers.[74]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Sahl ibn Saʿd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min*

among the people of *īmān* is in the position of the head in the body: the *mu'min* suffers pain for the people of *īmān* just as the body suffers pain because of what is in the head."[75]

In the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* is the *mu'min's* mirror. The *mu'min* is the *mu'min's* brother: he keeps destruction away from him, and protects him from behind."[76]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Anas ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "None of you has *īmān* until he wants for his brother what he wants for himself."[77]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Sharīḥ al-Kaʿbī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "By Allah, he does not have *īmān*! By Allah, he does not have *īmān*! By Allah, he does not have *īmān*!" They asked, "Who is that, Messenger of Allah?" He said, "He whose neighbour is not safe from his calamities."[78]

Al-Ḥākim narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who eats to satisfaction while his neighbour is hungry is not a *mu'min*."[79]

Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated from a hadith of Sahl ibn Muʿādh al-Juhanī from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever gives for the sake

of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah, and loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah…" Imam Aḥmad added, "…and gives in marriage for the sake of Allah, has completed and perfected his *īmān*."[80] In a version of Imam Aḥmad there is that, "He asked the Prophet ﷺ about the best [part] of *īmān* and he said, 'That you love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah and you exercise your tongue with the remembrance of Allah.' He asked, 'What else, Messenger of Allah?' He answered, "That you want for people what you want for yourself, and you dislike for them what you dislike for yourself.'" In another version of his there is, "…and that you speak well or be quiet."[81] In this hadith there is mentioned that a great deal of remembrance of Allah is one of the best parts of *īmān*.

He also narrated the hadith of ʿAmr ibn al-Jumūḥ that he heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "The slave is not fit for complete and pure *īmān* until he loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah. When he loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah he has become worthy of friendship from Allah, exalted is He."[82] He also narrated the hadith of al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The

strongest handhold of *īmān* is that you love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah."[83] Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "Love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah, take friends for the sake of Allah and make enemies for the sake of Allah, for you will only attain the friendship of Allah by that. The slave will never find the savour of *īmān*, even if he does a great deal of prayer and fasting until he is like that. Most of the brotherhood [between] people has become because of something to do with the world, and that doesn't help its people at all." Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī and Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated it.[84]

SECTION [ABOUT IḤSĀN]

As for *iḥsān*, it has been mentioned in the Qur'ān in many places, sometimes coupled with *īmān*, sometimes with Islam, and sometimes coupled with taqwā or right action.

It is coupled with *īmān* in His words, exalted is He:

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوا وَّآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَّآمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَّأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Those who have *īmān* and do right actions are not to blame for anything they have eaten provided they

have taqwā and *īmān* and do right actions, and then again have *taqwā* and *īmān*, and then have *taqwā* and do good (*aḥsanū*). Allah loves good-doers (*muḥsinūn*).”[85]

And in His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا

“But as for those who have *īmān* and do right actions, We will not let the wage of good-doers (*muḥsinūn*) go to waste.”[86]

It is paired with Islam as in His words, exalted is He:

بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ

“Not so! All who submit themselves completely to Allah and are good-doers (*muḥsinūn*) will find their reward with their Lord.”[87]

And in His words, exalted is He:

وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ

“Those who submit themselves completely to Allah and do good (aḥsanū) have grasped the Firmest

Handhold."[88]

It is paired with *taqwā* in His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَواْ وَّالَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ

"Allah is with those who have *taqwā* of Him and with those who are good-doers (*muḥsinūn*)."[89]

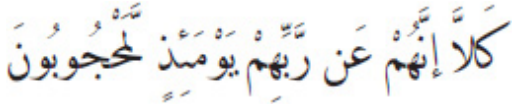
It is mentioned alone by itself in His words, exalted is He:

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُواْ الْحُسْنَى وَزِيَادَةٌ

"Those who do good (*aḥsanū*) will have the best and more!"[90]

It is reliably established in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from the Prophet ﷺ that the explanation of the 'more' [in the above *āyah*] is gazing upon the face of Allah, exalted is He, in the Garden, which is commensurate with His making it a recompense for the people of *iḥsān*, because *iḥsān* is that the *mu'min* should worship his Lord in the world in the manner of being present and with fearful vigilance as if he sees Him with his heart and gazes on Him during his worship. The reward of that is gazing upon Allah with the eyes in the next life.

The opposite of this is that which Allah, exalted is He, informs us of the recompense of the *kuffār* in the next life:



"No indeed! Rather that Day they will be veiled from their Lord,"[91] which He makes their reward for their condition in the world, which is the accumulation of rust on their hearts to the extent that veiled from knowledge (*maʿrifah*) of Him and fearful vigilance for Him in the world. Thus, their reward for that state is that they are veiled from seeing Him in the next life.

Thus his words ﷺ on *iḥsān*, "That you should worship Allah as if you see Him..." indicate that the slave worships Allah, exalted is He, in this way, which is bearing in his consciousness His nearness and that he is in front of Him as if he sees Him, and that requires that one have fear, awe and exaltation [of Allah], as has been narrated in the version of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ, "That you should fear Allah as if you see Him." It also requires that one be sincere in one's worship and exert oneself to make it good, whole and

complete. The Prophet ﷺ counselled a group of his companions with this piece of advice, as Ibrāhīm al-Hijrī narrated from Abū'l Aḥwaṣ that AbūDharr رضي الله عنه said, "My intimate friend ﷺ counselled me to fear Allah as if I see Him, for if I do not see Him, He sees me."

It has been narrated that Ibn ʿUmar رضي الله عنهما said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took hold of apart of my body and said, 'Worship Allah as if you see Him!'" An-Nasā'ī narrated it[92] and there is from a hadith of Zayd ibn Arqam both attributing it [to the Prophet ﷺ] as a *marfūʿ* hadith and stopping short[with it at Zayd] asa *mawqūf* statement, "Be as if you see Allah, for if you do not see Him He sees you."[93]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated from a hadith of Anas رضي الله عنه that, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me something and make it concise!' He replied, 'Pray the prayer of someone bidding farewell, for if you do not see Him, He sees you.'"[94]

In the famous hadith of Ḥārithah, which has been narrated in various ways, in some of which it is *mursal* and also with a full chain of transmission, but the *mursal* form is more authentic, there is that the Prophet ﷺ asked him, "Ḥārithah, how are you this

morning?" He said, "This morning I have become a true *mu'min*." He said, "Think about what you are saying! Because every statement has a reality." He said, "Messenger of Allah, my self dislikes the world, so it is sleepless at night and thirsty in the day, and it is as if I am gazing upon the Throne of my Lord appearing, and it is as if I am gazing upon the people of the Garden in the Garden and how they visit each other in it, and as if I am gazing upon the people of the Fire and how they howl in it." He said, "You have seen, so remain firm. [You are] a slave for whom Allah has illuminated the *īmān* in his heart."[95]

It is narrated in the hadith of Abū Umāmah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ advised a man saying, "Be modest before Allah with the modesty you would have before two right-acting men of your close family who never leave you."[96] It is narrated in another version, "Be modest before your Lord."

It is narrated of Muʿādh that the Prophet ﷺ counselled him when he sent him to the Yemen and said, "Be modest before Allah as you would be modest before a man of your family of whom you have some awe."[97] The Prophet ﷺ was asked about uncovering the private parts when alone and he said, "Allah has

more right that one should have modesty before Him."[98]

Abū'd-Dardā' advised a man and said to him, "Worship Allah as if you see Him."[99] ʿUrwah ibn az-Zubayr asked Ibn ʿUmar for his daughter's hand while the two of them were doing *ṭawāf* and he didn't answer him. Later he met him and apologised saying, "We were in *ṭawāf* visualising Allah before our eyes." Abū Nuʿaym and others narrated it.[100]

About his saying ﷺ, "For if you do not see Him, He sees you," it is said that it [this phrase] is like a cause of the first, because whenthe slave is commandedto be fearfully vigilant of Allah, exalted is He, in his worship and to bear His nearness to His slave in his heart to such an extent that it is as if the slave sees Him, then it is difficult for him and he can seek help in that with his belief that Allah sees him and watches over his private and his public affairs, his inward and his outward, and that nothing of him is hidden from Him. When he makes a reality of this station then it becomes easier for him to move on to the second station, the perpetual realisation with his inner sight of the nearness of Allah to His slave and His 'withness'[101] until it is as if he sees Him. Someone said

that it rather indicates that whoever finds it difficult to worship Allah, exalted is He, as if he sees Him, then let him worship Allah on the basis that Allah sees him and watches over him, and let him be modest before His gaze towards him; as one of the gnostics said, “Fear Allah becoming the most insignificant of those who look at you.”

One of them said, “Fear Allah according to the measure of His power over you, and be modest before Allah according to the measure of His nearness to you.”

One of the women gnostics of the first right-acting generations said, “Whoever acts for the sake of Allah as one who has direct witnessing is a gnostic, and whoever acts on the basis of Allah’s witnessing him is sincere.” She indicated the two above-mentioned stations: first,[102] the station of sincerity, which is that the slave should act keeping in consciousness Allah’s witnessing of him, watching over him and nearness to him. When the slave seeks to keep this in his consciousness during his actions, and he works on that basis then he is sincere towards Allah, exalted is He, since his seeking to keep that in his consciousness during his action prevents him from turning to other

than Allah and intending any other in his action. Second,[103] [she indicated] the station of witnessing, which is that the slave acts according to the requirements of his witnessing of Allah, exalted is He, in his heart, and it is that the heart is illuminated by *īmān*, and the inner sight penetrates through to gnosis, so much so that the Unseen becomes as if it were right in front of his eyes. This is the reality of the station of *iḥsān* indicated in the hadith of Jibrīl ﷺ and the people of this station have different degrees according to the strength of penetration of their inner sight.

A party of the people of knowledge explained the "most exalted designation" mentioned in His words, exalted is He

وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَى فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"His is the most exalted designation in the heavens and the earth,"[104] with this meaning, and similarly His words, exalted is He:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The metaphor of His Light is that of a niche in which there is a lamp.”[105]

What is meant is “*the metaphor of His Light*” “in the heart of the mu’min”, which is what Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and others of the right-acting first generations said. There has already been mention of the hadith that “The best [part] of *īmān* is that you know that Allah is with you wherever you are,” and the hadith, “What is a man’s purification of himself?” He said, “That he knows that Allah is with him wherever he is.”

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Three [people] will be in the shade of Allah, exalted is He, on the Day of Resurrection, the Day on which there is no shade but His shade: a man who knows that Allah is with him wherever he turns…”[106]

The Qur’ān expresses this same sense in numerous places, such as in His words, exalted is He:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ

“He is with you wherever you are.”[107]

And His words:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

"If My slaves ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me."[108]

And His words:

مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى مِن ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا

"Three men cannot confer together secretly without Him being the fourth of them, or five without Him being the sixth of them, or fewer than that or more without Him being with them wherever they are."[109]

And His words:

وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُو مِنْهُ مِن قُرْآنٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُوداً إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ

"You do not engage in any matter or recite any of the Qur'ān or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it."[110]

And His words:

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

"We are nearer to him than his jugular vein."[111]

And His words:

وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ

"And they cannot conceal themselves from Allah. He is with them."[112]

Authentic hadith are narrated recommending that one should seek to remain conscious of this nearness during the acts of worship, such as his words ﷺ, "If any of you stands praying he hold intimate discourse with his Lord"or "his Lord is between him and the *qiblah*,"[113] and his words, "Truly Allah is before his face when he prays,"[114] and his words, "Allah directs His face towards the face of His slave in his prayer as long as he does not turn away."[115]

There are also his words to those who raised their voices in *dhikr*, "You are not calling on one who is deaf or absent. You are calling on One Who Hears, Who is Near,"[116] and in another version, "...and He is nearer to you than the neck of your riding beast," and in another version, "...and He is nearer to you than the

jugular vein."[117] There are his words, "Allah ﷻ says, 'I am with My slave when he remembers Me and his lips move with [mention of] Me.'"[118] And his words, "Allah ﷻ says, 'I am in the opinion My slave has of Me, and I am with him wherever he remembers Me. If he remembers me in his self, I remember him in Myself. If he remembers me in an assembly, I remember him in an assembly better than it. If he draws nearer to me by the span of a hand, I draw nearer to him by a cubit.[119] If he draws nearer to Me by a cubit, I draw nearer to him by a fathom.[120] If he comes to me walking, I rush towards him."[121]

Whoever understands anything of these texts anthropomorphically, or in the sense of incarnation, or as a form of monism has only been taken away from Allah ﷻ and from His Messenger ﷺ by his ignorance and poor understanding. Allah and His Messenger are free from all of that. Glorious is the One Whom nothing resembles and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

Abū Bakr al-Muzanī asked, "Who is like you, son of Adam? My Intimate Friend is between you and the *miḥrāb* and water. Whenever you wish you can go to Allah ﷻ without an interpreter between you and

Him." Whoever manages to keep this in his consciousness during *dhikr* of Allah and during His worship, necessarily becomes at ease with Allah and becomes averse to His creation.

Thawr ibn Yazīd said, "I read in a book that ʿĪsā ﷺ said, 'Disciples [Ḥawāriyyun], speak to Allah a great deal and speak little to people!' They asked, 'How can we speak to Allah a great deal?' He answered, 'Go alone and hold intimate discourse with Him. Go alone and supplicate Him.'" Abū Nuʿaym narrated it.

He also narrated with a chain of transmission that Riyāḥ said, "There was a man among us who used to pray a thousand *rakʿahs* every day and night until he became crippled in his legs. Then he would pray a thousand *rakʿahs* every night seated. When he prayed the afternoon prayer he would draw up his legs and, while wrapped in his garments and facing the *qiblah*, say, 'I am astonished at people who can be intimate and at ease with anyone other than You. Even more so am I amazed that people's hearts can be at ease remembering anyone other than You.'"[122]

Abū Usāmah said, "I went to see Muḥammad ibn an-Naḍr al-Ḥārithī, and saw that it was as if he was ill

at ease. So I asked, ‘It is as if you do not like to be visited?’ He said, ‘That is true.’ I asked, ‘Do you not become lonely?’ He said, ‘How could I be lonely when He says, “I sit with whoever remembers Me”?’”[123]

Someone asked Mālik ibn Mighwal when he was sitting alone in his house, “Do you not become lonely?” He replied, “Does anyone become lonely with Allah?”

Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad used to withdraw in solitude into his house saying, “Whoever’s eye does not find rest with You, then his eye will not find rest. And whoever is not at ease with you will not find ease.”

Ghazwān said, “I have found my heart’s rest and ease in sitting with the One Who has my necessities.”

Muslim ibn Yasār said, “Pleasure-seekers find no pleasure like withdrawal for the purpose of intimate discourse with Allah ﷻ.”

Muslim al-ʿĀbid (the worshipper) said, “If it were not for the congregational prayer I would never go out of my door until I die.” He said, “Those who obey Allah find no pleasure sweeter than withdrawal to converse with their Lord, nor anything which they eagerly anticipate more of all the tremendous rewards

in the next life which is more important in their breasts and sweeter to their hearts than gazing towards Him," and then he passed out.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said, "The highest of ranks is that you should devote yourself toyour Lord, and feel at ease with Himin your heart and consciousness and all of your limbs so much so that you hope for nothing but your Lord and fear nothing but your wrong action, and His love becomes so firmly established in your heart that you will never prefer anything to it. If you are like that you will not care whether you are on land or sea, on the plains or in the mountains. Your longing to meet your Beloved will be like the longing the thirsty person has for cold water, and the longing the hungry person has for wholesome food, and the remembrance of Allah will be sweeter to you than honey and more delicious than pure water to the thirsty person on a hot summer's day."

Al-Fuḍayl said, "Good fortune to whoever becomes alienated from people and with whom Allah sits."

Abū Sulaymān, "Allah has never made me at ease with any but Him."

Maʿrūf said to a man, "Rely on Allah so much that He becomes the One with whom you sit, the

Companion who gladdens you and the One to whom you bring your complaint."

Dhū'n-Nūn said, "One of the signs of those who love Allah is that they are not cheerfully at ease with anyone other than Him, and they are never lonely with Him." Then he said, "When love of Allah, exalted is He, takes up its abode in the heart then one becomes cheerfully at ease with Allah, because Allah is more sublime in the breasts of the gnostics than that they should love anyone other than Him." There has been a great deal said by the People in this section which would be very lengthy to mention, and in that which we have mentioned here there is enough, if Allah, exalted is He, wills.

Whoever considers what we have indicated of that which this tremendous hadith shows will know that all the sciences and gnoses originate in this hadith and are comprised under it. None of the sciences of the different groups of the people of knowledge of this community on which they discourse go beyond this hadith and what it shows, in general or in specific details. The people of the science of *fiqh* only talk about the acts of worship which are among the general features of Islam and in addition they discuss

judgements and rules about wealth, marriage contracts, injuries and homicides. All of that is a part of the science of Islam to which we previously drew attention. There remains a great deal of the science of Islam – courtesy, good character, and so on – about which only a few talk. Neither do they talk about the meanings of the two *shahādahs* and yet they are the source of all of Islam.

Those who talk about the principles and sources of the *dīn* discuss the meaning of the two *shahādahs* and of *īmān* in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and *īmān* in the Decree. Those who discuss the science of gnosis and behaviour discuss the station of *iḥsān* and also the inward acts which are comprised under *īmān* such as fear, love, reliance, contentment, patience, etc. So that all the revealed sciences about which the different Muslim groups talk are concentrated in this hadith and all of them originate in it. Thus, in this hadith by itself there is sufficient, praise and the blessing belong to Allah.

There only remains to discuss the mention of the Hour in this hadith.

The words of Jibrīl ﷺ "Tell me about the Hour," so that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The one asked about it

knows no more about it than the one who asks,,"meaning that created beings' knowledge of the moment of the Hour are all equal. This indicates that Allah, exalted is He, has exclusive knowledge of it. For this reason it is customary that when the person of knowledge is asked about something he doesn't know he should say, "I do not know," and that does not diminish him at all. On the contrary it is from his scrupulousness and from his *dīn*, since "above every possessor of knowledge there is an All-Knowing One".[124] In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ there is that the Prophet ﷺ spoke about, "Five [things] which only Allah, exalted is He, knows, and then he recited:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَداً وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

'Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour and sends down abundant rain and knows what is in the womb. And no self knows what it will earn tomorrow and no self knows in what land it will die. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.'"[125]

Allah ﷻ says:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّي لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً

"They will ask you about the Hour: when is it due? Say: 'Knowledge of it rests with my Lord alone. He alone will reveal it at its proper time. It hangs heavy in the heavens and the earth. It will not come upon you except suddenly.'"[126]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are five keys of the Unseen which no one knows but Allah," then he recited this āyah:

'Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour...'"[127]

Imam Aḥmad also narrated it and his wording is: "The Prophet ﷺ said, 'I have been given the keys of everything except for five: "Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour..."'"[128] He also narrated with its chain of transmission from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that he said, "Your Prophet ﷺ was given the keys of everything except for five: 'Truly Allah has knowledge of the Hour...'"[129]

His words, "Then tell me about its tokens *amārāt*)," meaning its signs (*ʿalāmāt*) which indicate that it has drawn close. In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah there is

that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I will tell you about its portents (*ashrāṭ*),” which are also its signs.

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned two signs of the Hour. First, “That the female slave should give birth to her mistress.” What is meant by mistress is her lady and her female owner. In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه there is, “her lord”. This is an indication of the conquest of the lands and the great number of slaves gained so that female slaves and their children are in great numbers. The female slave is owned by her master, but his children by her are of his status, for the child of a master has the status of the master, and thus the female slave’s child’s status is that of her [his mother’s] lord and master.

Al-Khaṭṭābī mentioned that some find a proof in that for the position they take that the slave-mother of the master’s child is only set free at the expense of her child out of his portion from the inheritance of his father, and that her ownership is transferred to her children by inheritance and she is freed by them, and that she may be sold before the death of her owner, but he said, “There are views on this proof.”

I say that some of them try to prove the opposite, that the slave-mother of the child is not sold and that

she is freed on the death of her owner in every case, because he made the child of the slave-woman her owner, so that it is as if her child is the one who frees her and her becoming free is ascribed to him, because it is as if he were the cause of her being set free and so becomes as if he were her *mawlā* [the master who had set her free]. This is like what is related of the Prophet ﷺ that he said about Māriyah, the mother of his child, when she gave birth to Ibrāhīm عليه السلام "Her son set her free."[130]

Imam Aḥmad sought a proof in this, for he said in the narration of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥakam from him, "That the slave woman gives birth to her mistress: i.e. there will be a great number of slave-mothers of children by their masters," saying, "When she gives birth she is freed because of her child," and he said, "In it there is a proof that the slave-mothers of children by their masters may not be sold."

His words, "The slave-woman gives birth to her mistress" has been explained as meaning that trade in slaves will increase so much that a daughter will be transported for the sake of trade and later freed, and then later her mother will be transported for the sake of trade and the daughter will buy her and make use

of her services unaware that she is her own mother, and this has indeed happened in Islam.

It has also been said that it means that slave-women will give birth to kings. Wakīʿ said that it means that non-Arabs will give birth to Arabs, and the Arabs are the kings over the non-Arabs and their lords.

The second sign:

In "that you see poor, naked, barefoot..." what is meant by the poor (*ʿālah*) is needy people as in His words, exalted is He:

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَى

"Did He not find you impoverished (*ʿā'ilan*) and enrich you?"[131]

His words, "...shepherds of sheep and goats competing in raising tall buildings" are thus narrated in the hadith of ʿUmar ﷺ. What is meant is that the least of the people will become their leaders with a great deal of wealth, to such an extent that they will boastfully compete in a great deal of building, and in decorating and bringing it to perfection.

In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ there is mention of three signs, of which there is that naked barefoot people will be the top people, and of which there is that the shepherds of sheep will compete in building.

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAṭā' narrated this hadith from ʿAbdullāh ibn Buraydah and he said in it, "And that you see deaf, dumb, blind, barefoot shepherds of sheep competing with each other in building as if the kings of people." He said, "So the man [Jibrīl] stood up and left, and we asked, 'Messenger of Allah, who are these you describe?" He answered, "They are the Arabs."[132] This is how this hadith is narrated with these last words by ʿAlī ibn Zayd from Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿmar from Ibn ʿUmar. As for the first wording it is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah.

His words, "Deaf, dumb, blind" indicate their ignorance and lack of knowledge and understanding. There are many hadith with this sense. Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated from a hadith of Ḥudhayfah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Hour will not arise until the most fortunate man in the world will be Fool son of Fool (Lukaʿ ibn Lukaʿ)."[133] In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān there is from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said,

“The world will not end until it belongs to Fool son of Fool.”[134]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of Abū Dharr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not arise until Fool son of Fool overcomes the world.”[135]

Imam Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of Anas ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Just before the Hour there will be treacherous years in which the trustworthy one will be suspect and the suspect one will be trusted and in which ar-Ruwaybidah will speak.”They asked, “Who is ar-Ruwaybidah?” He said, “The foolish person who talks about the community’s business.” In another narration there is, “The corrupt person who talks about the community’s business.” In a version of Imam Aḥmad there is, “that just before the Dajjāl there will be treacherous years in which the liar will be believed and the truthful person disbelieved, and the trustworthy person will be regarded as unreliable and the unreliable person will be trusted…”[136] and he mentioned the rest of it.

The general nature of what is mentioned in this hadith of the signs of the Hour is that affairs will be entrusted to the wrong people, as the Prophet ﷺ said to the one who asked him about the Hour, “When the

affair is entrusted to the wrong people, then expect the Hour,"[137] because when the barefoot naked shepherds of sheep – and they are ignorant harsh people – become the top people and owners of wealth and property to such an extent that they compete with each other in building, then because of that the organisation of the world and of the *dīn* become corrupted. If one who was impoverished and needy is one of the top people and he has become a king over people, whether his kingship is universal or only in some particular things, then he will hardly be able to give people their due rights. On the contrary, he will prefer himself over them because of the wealth he owns. One of the right-acting first generations said, "That you should stretch out your hands to the mouth of the serpent for him to gnaw it is better for you than for you to stretch it out to the hand of a wealthy man who had undergone poverty." If, along with that, he is ignorant and harsh then the *dīn* will become corrupted by that, because he has no desire to improve people's *dīn* nor to teach them, on the contrary he desires to collect wealth and store it as treasure and is totally unconcerned whether people's *dīn* becomes corrupt,

nor [does he care about] whoever of his family squanders basic necessities.

He said in another hadith, “The Hour will not arise until every tribe is led by its hypocrites.”[138] When the kings and leaders of people are in this state every other circumstance will be reversed: the liar will be believed and the truthful person disbelieved, the unreliable person will be trusted and the trustworthy person distrusted, the ignorant person will speak and the knowledgeable person will be silent or totally non-existent, as is authentically narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Some of the signs of the Hour are that knowledge will be removed and ignorance will dominate,”[139] and he advised, “that knowledge will be removed with the death of people of knowledge so that when not one person of knowledge remains, people will take ignorant leaders who will be asked and thus give judgement without knowledge and will go astray and lead others astray.”[140] Ash-Shaʿbī said, “The Hour will not arise until knowledge becomes ignorance and ignorance becomes knowledge.” All of this is a part of the reversal of realities and the inversion of affairs at the end of time.

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim there is that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ascribed [to the Prophet], "Truly of the signs of the Hour there is that the best will be disparaged and the worst will be honoured."[141]

In his words, "... competing with each other in making tall buildings" there is proof that it is blameworthy to compete boastfully, particularly in making tall buildings. Building tall structures was not known in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions, may Allah be pleased with them. On the contrary, their buildings were small according to necessity. *Abū'z-Zinād* narrated from *al-Aʿraj* that Abū Hurayrah ؓ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The Hour will not arise until people compete with each in making tall buildings.'" Al-Bukhārī narrated it.[142]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Anas ؓ that, "The Prophet ﷺ went out and saw an elevated dome and asked, 'What is this?' They said, 'This is so-and-so's,' naming one of the Anṣār men. Its owner came and greeted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ but he turned away from him repeatedly, and so the man demolished it."[143] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated through another route also from Anas, and his version has, "So the Prophet ﷺ

said, ‘Every building,’ and he gestured with his hand like this above his head, ‘which is more than this is unwholesome.’”[144] Ḥarīth ibn as-Sā’ib said [narrating] from al-Ḥasan [that al-Ḥasan said], “I used to enter the houses of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ during the khalifate of ʿUthmān ؓ and I could reach the ceiling with my hand.”

It is narrated from ʿUmar ؓ that he wrote, “Do not make your buildings tall, because it is the worst of your days.”[145]

Yazīd ibn Abī Ziyād said, “Ḥudhayfah ؓ asked Salmān, ‘Should we not build you a house, Abū ʿAbdullāh?’ He asked, ‘Why? so you can make me a king?’ He replied, ‘No. We will build you a house of cane, which we will roof with reeds that will almost touch your head when you stand, and will almost touch both of your sides when you sleep.’ He said, ‘It is almost as if you had been within my self [and seen what I desired].’”

ʿAmmār ibn Abī ʿAmmār said, “If a man erects a house taller than seven cubits, he is called, ‘O most deviant of the deviant, where are you going?’”[146] Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated all of it.

Yaʿqūb ibn Abī Shaybah said in his *Musnad*, "It has reached me that Ibn Abī ʿĀ'ishah said, 'Ibn Abī Shumaylah told us, "The Muslims resided around the mosque,"– meaning in Baṣra – "in hair tents and then theft spread among them. So they wrote to ʿUmar and he gave them permission to use cane. They built with cane and then fire spread among them. So he gave them permission to use clay bricks but he forbade anyone to raise the roof above seven cubits, saying, 'If you build your houses with it, then build the mosque with it.'" Ibn Abī ʿĀ'ishah said, "ʿUtbah ibn Ghazwān built the mosque of Baṣra from cane and he said, "Whoever prays in it when it is made of cane is better than whoever prays in it when it is made of adobe. Whoever prays in it when it is made of adobe is better than whoever prays in it when it is made of baked brick."""

Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Hour will not arise until people boastfully compete with each other [in building] mosques,"[147] and a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنهما that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I see that you will exalt your mosques after me just as the Jews exalted their synagogues and the Christians their churches."[148]

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated from Ismāʿīl ibn Muslim that al-Ḥasan ﷺ said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ built the mosque he said, 'Build it as a shelter made of palm-sticks covered with panic grass like the shelter of Mūsā ﷺ.'" Someone asked al-Ḥasan, "What was the shelter of Mūsā?" He said, "When he raised his hand he could reach the shelter," meaning "the ceiling."[149]

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (8).

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* (173).

3 Sūrah Luqman: 33.

4 Al-Bukhārī (50), Muslim (9).

5 Muslim (10).

6 Aḥmad (1:319).

7 ﷺ "may Allah be pleased with both of them [Ibn ʿAbbās and al-ʿAbbās]." Trans.

8 Aḥmad (4:129 and 164)

9 At-Tirmidhī (2610)

10 It is both a physical act and one involving giving of wealth since it involves spending a great deal of money and physical acts of worship. Trans.

11 *Ṣaḥīḥ* Ibn Ḥibbān (173).

12 Hadith number three in this collection. Ed.

13 Al-Bukhārī (10), Muslim (40), and others.

14 Al-Bukhārī (12), Muslim (1013), and others.

15 Al-Ḥākim (52)

16 Ad-Daylamī in *al-Firdaws* (786).

17 *Mawqūf*: a saying of a Companion which he did not explicitly attribute to the Prophet ﷺ. Very often Companions did not attribute totally *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith. Trans.

18 Al-Bazzār (2927).

19 *Marfūʿ*: hadith ascribed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with a connected chain of transmission. Trans.

20 At-Tirmidhī (2859), Aḥmad (4:182), al-Ḥākim (245), aṭ-Ṭabarī (1:75), and an-Nasā'ī in *al-Kubrā* (11,233).

21 Sūrah Yūnus: 25

22 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 285

23 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 177

24 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 3-4

25 *Aṣ-Ṣirāṭ*: the narrow path laid over the Fire which the *mu'minūn* pass across to reach the Garden and from which the *kāfirūn* and *munāfiqūn* fall into the Fire. Trans.

26 The Book mentioned here is the preserved tablet (*al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūẓ*). This is where Allah has recorded His prior knowledge of all things. Trans.

27 *Ahl as-sunnah wa'l-jamāʿah.*

28 Al-Qadariyyah.

29 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 2-4

30 Al-Bukhārī (523), Muslim (17)

31 Al-Bukhārī (9), Muslim (35)

32 Al-Bukhārī (2475), Muslim (57)

33 Aḥmad (4:114), ʿAbd ibn Ḥumayd in the *Musnad* (301).

34 Aḥmad (3:134-5), Ibn Abī Shaybah (11:11), Abū Yaʿlā (2923).

35 *Taṣdīq* or affimation was the definition many of the right-acting first generations gave of *īmān*. Trans.

36 Abū Dāwūd (3201), Ibn Mājah (1498), at-Tirmidhī (1024).

37 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 14

38 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 14

39 Al-Bukhārī (27), Muslim (150)

40 Ibn Abī Shaybah (8:3), ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmad in *as-Sunnah* (812).

41 An-Nasā'ī in *al-Kubrā* (5:175-6), Aḥmad (4:110; 5:288-9).

42 Sūrat an-Naml: 44

43 Ibn Mājah (87).

44 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 19

45 This section is about inner actions of the heart that are comprised in Islam. Trans.

46 i.e. if a *mu'min* could avoid death and destruction by embracing *kufr*, he would prefer death. Trans.

47 Aḥmad (5:3-5), an-Nasā'ī (5:4, 82-83).

48 Ibn Mājah (3056).

49 Al-Bukhārī (11), Muslim (42).

50 Muslim (2564).

51 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 2-4

52 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 15

53 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 122

54 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 23

55 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 175

56 Muslim (34)

57 Sūrat an-Nisā': 64

58 Al-Bukhārī (16), Muslim (43)

59 Al-Bukhārī (15), Muslim (44)

60 Aḥmad (4:11-12)

61 Aḥmad (1:18, 26)

62 *Musnad* of al-Ḥārith as is in the *Zawā'id* of al-Haythamī (10).

63 Aḥmad (3:8)

64 Aḥmad (4:385)

65 At-Tirmidhī (2612)

66 Abū Dāwūd (2682), at-Tirmidhī (1162), Ibn Ḥibbān (479, 4176), al-Ḥākim (1:3).

67 Al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā* (7067), and in *ash-Shuʿab* (3297)

68 Abū Dāwūd (1582)

69 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (8796)

70 Al-Bukhārī (24), Muslim (35)

71 Aḥmad (4:126), Ibn Mājah (43)

72 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 10

73 Al-Bukhārī (6011), Muslim (586)

74 Al-Bukhārī (481), Muslim (2585)

75 Aḥmad (5:340)

76 Abū Dāwūd (4918)

77 Al-Bukhārī (13), Muslim (45)

78 Al-Bukhārī (6016)

79 Al-Ḥākim (7307), al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (112), al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā* (19452) and in *ash-Shuʿab* (9536), Abū Yaʿlā (2699).

80 Aḥmad (3:440), at-Tirmidhī (2521)

81 Aḥmad (5247)

82 Aḥmad (3:430)

83 Aḥmad (5:247)

84 Al-Marwazī in *Taʿẓīm qadr aṣ-ṣalāh* (366)

85 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 93

86 Sūrat al-Kahf: 30

87 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 111

88 Sūrah Luqmān: 21

89 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 128

90 Sūrah Yūnus: 26

91 Sūrat al-Muṭaffifin: 15

92 Attributed to an-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-kubrā* by al-Mizzī in *at-Tuḥfah*. Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (6:115)

93 Ibn al-Mubārak in *az-Zuhd* (222)

94 Al-Haythamī narrated it in *al-Majmaʿ* ascribing it to aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

95 Ibn Abī Shaybah (30425), aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (3367), al-Bayhaqī in *ash-Shuʿab* (10590).

96 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (2:136; 4:89), according to the *Majmaʿ* (6:148) aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it in *al-Kabīr*

97 Al-Bazzār in his *Musnad* (2642)

98 Abū Dāwūd (4017), at-Tirmidhī (2769) and Ibn Mājah (1920)

99 Adh-Dhahabī in *as-Siyar* (2:350)

100 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:309), al-Fākihī in *Akhbār Makkah* (339)

101 'Withness' – the fact that Allah is 'with' His slave when he remembers Him. Trans.

102 The latter part of her statement. Trans.

103 In the former part of her statement. Trans.

104 Sūrat ar-Rūm 27

105 Sūrat an-Nūr: 35

106 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7935)

107 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 4

108 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 186

109 Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 7

110 Sūrah Yūnus: 61

111 Sūrah Qāf: 16

112 Sūrat an-Nisā': 107

113 Al-Bukhārī (405), Muslim (551).

114 Al-Bukhārī (406), Muslim (547)

115 At-Tirmidhī (2863), Aḥmad (4:130, 292), al-Ḥākim (863)

116 Al-Bukhārī (2992), Muslim (2704)

117 Muslim (2704)

118 Ibn Mājah (3792), Aḥmad (2:540), Ibn Ḥibbān (815), al-Bukhārī as a *taʿlīq* (13:417)

119 A cubit is the distance between the fingertips of the hand and the elbow. Trans.

120 A fathom is the distance between the fingertips of the two hands when the arms are stretched wide open. Trans.

121 Al-Bukhārī (7405), Muslim (2675)

122 Abū Nuʿaym narrated both in *al-Ḥilyah* (6:94, 195)

123 Al-Bayhaqī in *ash-Shuʿab* (709), Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:217)

124 Sūrah Yūsuf: 76

125 Sūrah Luqmān: 33

126 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 187

127 Al-Bukhārī (1039)

128 Aḥmad (2:85-86)

129 Aḥmad (1:438)

130 Ibn Mājah (2516)

131 Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā: 8

132 Ibn Ḥibbān (173)

133 Aḥmad (5:389), at-Tirmidhī (2209)

134 Ibn Ḥibbān (6721)

135 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (3076), Aḥmad in *az-Zuhd* (192)

136 Aḥmad (3:220), Abū Yaʿlā (3715), aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (3258)

137 Al-Bukhārī (59)

138 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* and *al-Kabīr*.

139 Al-Bukhārī (80), Muslim (2671)

140 Al-Bukhārī (100), Muslim (2673)

141 Al-Ḥākim (4:554-5), Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād in *al-Fitan* (693)

142 Al-Bukhārī (7121)

143 Abū Dāwūd (5237)

144 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

145 Al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (452)

146 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

147 Ibn Mājah (739)

148 Ibn Mājah (740)

149 Al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il an-nubuwwah* (2:542)

الحديث الثالث

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عنْهُما قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُول اللهِ ﷺ يَقُوْلُ: ﴿بُنِيَ الإِسْلاَمُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ؛ شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاّ اللهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُه، وَ إِقَامِ الصَّلاَةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Islam is Built on Five

From Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ that he said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, 'Islam is built on five: witnessing that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishment of the prayer, payment of *zakāh*, Ḥajj of the House, and the fast of Ramaḍān'." Al-Bukhārī (8) and Muslim (16) narrated it.

They narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in the version of ʿIkrimah ibn Khālid from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ. Muslim narrated it in two other ways from Ibn ʿUmar, and he has other versions from him. This hadith has been narrated from Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Bajalī from

the Prophet ﷺ which Imam Aḥmad narrated. In the previous hadith we have already looked at Islam.

What is meant by this hadith is that Islam is built on these five which are thus like the sides or corners and the supports of its building. Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated it in the *Kitāb aṣ-ṣalāh* "Book of Prayer" with the wording, "Islam is built on five supports[1]..." What is meant is to strike the similitude of Islam as a building whose supports are these five, such that the building will not stand firm without them. The rest of the attributes of Islam are things by the addition of which the building is made complete, but if any of them are missing the building will stand although lacking, but will not fall into ruin because of that shortcoming, as opposed to if it lacks any one of these five supports, because Islam will disappear if all of them are missing without any doubt. Similarly, in the absence of the two shahādahs, because what is meant by the two *shahādahs* is belief in Allah and His Messenger. Al-Bukhārī narrated a version as a taʿlīq, "Islam is built on five: belief in Allah and His Messenger..." In a version of Muslim's, "...on five: that Allah is unified ﷻ ..." and in another version of his,

"...on that Allah is worshipped and whatever is apart from Him is rejected..."[2]

From this it is known that *īmān* in Allah and His Messenger is included under Islam as we established in the previous hadith. As for the prayer, there are many hadith which show that whoever abandons it has gone out of Islam. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Jābir ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Between a man and *kufr*[3] and *shirk*[4] is the prayer."[5] Similar things are narrated in hadith of Buraydah, Thawbān, Anas and others.

Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣṢāmit ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not abandon the prayer deliberately, for whoever abandons Islam deliberately has gone out of the *dīn*."[6]

In the hadith of Muʿādh ﷺ there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The main part of the matter is Islam, and its tent-pole is the prayer,"[7] and so he regarded the prayer as the central tent-pole of a great tent, without which the tent cannot stand or last, and if the central tent-pole were to fall the tent would fall, and it would not last without it.

ʿUmar ﷺ said, "There is no portion in Islam for whoever abandons the prayer."[8] Saʿd ﷺ and ʿAlī ibn

Abī Ṭālib ﷺ said, “Whoever gives it up has become a *kāfir*.”[9]

ʿAbdullāh ibn Shaqīq said, “The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not regard the abandonment of any of the actions as *kufr* except for the prayer.”[10]

Abū Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī said, “Abandoning the prayer is *kufr* and there is no disagreement about it.”

A whole body of the right-acting first generations and of the later generations took this position, and it is the position of Ibn al-Mubārak, Aḥmad and Isḥāq, and Isḥāq said that it is the consensus of the people of knowledge. Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī said, “It is the position of the majority of the people of hadith.” A party of them took the position that whoever deliberately abandons any one of the five pillars of Islam is thus a *kāfir*, which is narrated of Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Nāfiʿ, al-Hakam, and it is one narration from Imam Aḥmad which a group of his companions chose, and it is also the position of Ibn Ḥabīb of the Malikis.

Ad-Dāraquṭnī and others narrate the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, “Someone asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, is the Ḥajj every year?’ He said, ‘If I said yes, it would become obligatory on you, and if it was obligatory on you, you would not be able to do it, and

if you were to abandon it you would become *kāfirūn*.'"[11]

Al-Lālkā'ī narrated by way of Mu'ammal that he said, "Ḥammād ibn Zayd told us from ʿAmr ibn Mālik an-Nukrī from Abū'l-Jawzā' from Ibn ʿAbbās, and I am sure that he ascribed it directly [to the Prophet ﷺ], 'There are three fastenings or handholds of Islam and pillars of the *dīn* upon which Islam is founded: the witnessing that there is no god but Allah, the prayer and the fast of Ramaḍān, and whoever abandons any one of them is by that a *kāfir* whose blood may lawfully be shed. You might find him to be extremely wealthy but he has not performed the Ḥajj yet he does not become separated as a *kāfir* and his blood may not lawfully be shed. You may find him to be extremely wealthy but without having paid the *zakāh*, yet he does not become separated as a *kāfir* and his blood may not lawfully be shed."[12] Qutaybah ibn Saʿīd narrated it from Ḥammād ibn Zayd in an abridged form which stopped short at him. Saʿīd ibn Zayd the brother of Ḥammād narrated it from ʿAmr ibn Mālik with this chain of transmission ascribing it directly [to the Prophet ﷺ], in which he said, "Whoever abandons any one of them is a disbeliever (*kāfir*) in Allah, from

whom no clever artifices or substitutes will be accepted, and his blood may lawfully be shed and his property seized," but without mentioning anything after that [of the other version].

It has been narrated that ʿUmar ﷺ imposed the *jizyah*[13] on those [of the People of the Book who accepted Islam but] who did not perform the Ḥajj, and he said, "They are not Muslims."[14] It is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd that the one who abandons *zakāh* is not a Muslim,[15] and also from Imam Aḥmad in one version that the one who abandons the prayer and the *zakāh* in particular is a *kāfir*, apart from [abandoning] the fast and Ḥajj."

Ibn ʿUyaynah said, "[The group named] Al-Murji'ah called the act of abandoning the obligations 'a wrong action' as if it were of the same status as doing an act which is forbidden, whereas they are not equal, because intentionally doing something forbidden without declaring that it is permitted is an act of disobedience, while abandoning an obligatory act – not out of ignorance or without a valid excuse – is *kufr*. The explanation of that lies in the affair of Iblīs and the learned Jews who verbally affirmed the

description of the Prophet ﷺ but did not act according to his *Sharīʿah*."

Aḥmad and Isḥāq derived a proof that abandoning the prayer is *kufr*, because it was *kufr* on the part of Iblīs to refuse to prostrate to Adam, and abandoning prostration to Allah is more serious.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the son of Adam recites [an *āyah* of] prostration and then prostrates, Iblīs moves away weeping and saying, 'Woe is me! The descendant of Adam was ordered to prostrate and so he prostrated and therefore the Garden is his. I was told to prostrate and I refused, and so the Fire is for me.'"[16]

Know that these five supports are tied to each other, and it has been narrated that some of them are not accepted without the others, as in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad that Ziyād ibn Nuʿaym al-Ḥaḍramī said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'There are four things which Allah has made obligatory in Islam, so that whoever produces three of them, they [the three] will not benefit him at all until he produces them all: the prayer, *zakāh*, fasting Ramaḍān and Ḥajj of the House.'" This is a *mursal* [hadith without the name of

the Companion who transmitted it] but it has [also] been narrated from Ziyād from ʿAmmārah ibn Ḥazm from the Prophet ﷺ.[17]

It has also been narrated from ʿUthmān ibn ʿAṭā' al-Khurasānī from his father that Ibn ʿUmar said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The *dīn* is five [things], of which Allah will not accept any one without the others: the *shahādah* that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, *īmān* in Allah, His angels, His Books and His Messengers, and in the Garden and the Fire, and life after death, all of these are one; and the five prayers are the central tent-pole of the *dīn*, Allah does not accept *īmān* unless accompanied by the prayer; and *zakāh* is purification from wrong actions and Allah does not accept *īmān*, nor the prayer unless accompanied by *zakāh*; whoever does all of these and then when Ramaḍān comes deliberately leaves out fasting, then Allah will not accept *īmān*, prayer or *zakāh* from him; whoever does all of these four and then Ḥajj becomes possible for him and he does not perform the Ḥajj or leave a bequest for someone to perform the Ḥajj on his behalf and none of his family perform the Ḥajj on his behalf, then Allah will not accept the other four from him.'"

Ibn Abī Ḥātim mentioned it and said, “I asked my father about it and he said, ‘This hadith is ignored,[18] and it is possible that it is the words of ʿAṭā’ al-Khurasānī.’” I say it is apparently his commentary on the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar. ʿAṭā’ was one of the great Syrian men of knowledge.

Ibn Masʿūd said, “Whoever does not pay the *zakāh* has no prayer.” The denial of the acceptability [of the prayer] is not a denial of its soundness, and it is not obligatory for him to repeat [the prayer] because of his leaving [out the *zakāh*]. What is really meant by that is that Allah is not pleased with him, nor is he praised for it in the Highest Assembly, nor is he boasted of to the angels, whereas whoever undertakes these pillars correctly receives acceptance in the above sense, but whoever does some of them without others does not receive that [acceptance] even though he is not punished for those things he did do with the same punishment as one who abandons them. On the contrary, he has discharged his responsibility [in respect of the obligation of prayer] and may even be rewarded for it.

From this it is known that doing some of those things which are forbidden and because of which *īmān*

decreases prevents acceptance [by Allah] of some of the actions of obedience and even some of the pillars of Islam in the sense that we have mentioned, as the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever drinks wine, Allah will not accept his prayer for forty days,”[19] and he said, “If a slave flees from his owners, his prayer is not accepted.”[20]

The hadith of Ibn ʿUmar is used to show that when a term is used for a number of different things it does not necessarily fall out of use because some of the [things which the term covers] fall out of use. This disproves the position of those who say that if you include actions under the term *īmān* it would have to disappear with the disappearance of one of the actions which are comprised under it, because the Prophet ﷺ made these five the supports of Islam and its structures, and he explained Islam as being composed of them in the hadith of Jibrīl, and in the hadith of Ṭalḥah ibn ʿAbdullāh in which a desert Arab asked the Prophet ﷺ about Islam and he explained it to him as these five.[21]

Along with that, those who disagree about *īmān* say that even if one or [even] four of the characteristics of Islam disappear, leaving only the two *shahādahs*, that

person does not go out of Islam because of that. Some of them narrate that Jibrīl asked the Prophet ﷺ about the ‘rules’ of Islam and not about Islam, but this wording is not thought to be authentic by the leading scholars and critics of hadith, among whom are Abū Zurʿah ar-Rāzī, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Abū Jaʿfar al-ʿUqaylī and others.

The people of knowledge strike the simile of *īmān* as a tree which has a trunk, boughs and branches, all of which are comprised under the term ‘tree’. Even if any of its boughs or branches fall away it still remains a ‘tree’, but one says only that it is a tree with a defect or that other trees are more complete than it. Allah strikes the same simile for *īmān*, in His words, exalted is He:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ
. تُؤْتِي أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا

“Do you do not see how Allah makes a metaphor of a good word: a good tree whose roots are firm and whose branches are in heaven? It bears fruit regularly by its Lord’s permission.”[22]

What is meant by ‘word’ is the word of *tawḥīd*, and by its root is meant the *tawḥīd* which is firmly established in the hearts, and its fruits are the right actions which spring from it.

The Prophet ﷺ likened the *mu’min* and the muslim to the date palm. Even if some of the date-palm’s boughs or its fruits are missing it does not entirely lose the name ‘date-palm’ even though lacking some of its branches and fruits.

Jihād is not mentioned in this hadith of Ibn ʿUmar even though *jihād* is the best of actions. In another version there is that Ibn ʿUmar was asked, “What about *jihād*?” He said, “*Jihād* is good, but this is what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us.” It was narrated by Imam Aḥmad.[23]

In the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal, “Truly the main part of the matter is Islam, and its central tent-pole is the prayer, and the summit of its hump is *jihād*.” The ‘summit of its hump’ is the highest thing in it but it is not one of its supports or its sides on which it is built. That is for two reasons: first, that *jihād* is [ordinarily] *farḍ kifāyah*[24] according to the majority of the people of knowledge, and it is not *farḍ ʿayn*[25] as opposed to these pillars.[26]

Second, that *jihād* does not continue right until the end of time. On the contrary, when ʿĪsā ﷺ arrives and there is no longer any other religious community than that of Islam at that time, then war will lay down its burdens and there will be no need of *jihād*, in contradistinction to these pillars which are obligatory upon the *mu'minūn* until Allah's command comes and they are still in that state, and Allah ﷻ knows best.

1 *Daʿā'im* are props, stays or supports. Trans.

2 Muslim (16)

3 *Kufr* – covering over [the blessings of Allah], ingratitude, disbelief, and rejection.

4 *Shirk* – associating partners with Allah. Trans.

5 Muslim (82)

6 Al-Marwazī (920), al-Lalkā'ī in *Uṣūl al-iʿtiqād*

7 At-Tirmidhī (2616)

8 Imam Mālik in his *Muwaṭṭa*' (1:38-39)

9 Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf* (11:47)

10 Ibn Abī Shaybah in *al-Muṣannaf* (11:49), at-Tirmidhī (2622)

11 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (2622), narrated in Muslim without the words, "and if you were to abandon it you would become *kāfirūn*." It is narrated with these exact words in the *Musnad* of ʿAbd ibn Ḥumayd as mentioned in *ad-Durr al-manthūr*.

12 Al-Lālkā'ī in *Uṣūl al-iʿtiqād* and Abū Yaʿlā in his *Musnad*.

13 *Jizyah* is the tax imposed on people of the Book living under Islamic governance according to the contract known as the *dhimmah*. Trans.

14 Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr narrated this in his *Musnad* as mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr*

15 Ibn Abī Shaybah (3:114)

16 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (81)

17 Aḥmad (4:200-1)

18 *Munkar* "ignored" or "unknown" hadith are those narrated by weak narrators which contradict narrations by stronger narrators.

19 Muslim (2003)

20 Muslim (2230)

21 A hadith of Ṭalḥah narrated by al-Bukhārī (46) and Muslim (11)

22 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 24

23 Aḥmad (2:26)

24 *Farḍ kifāyah* is an obligation on the community such that if a party or individual carry it out the community are absolved of the wrong of having neglected it. Trans.

25 *Farḍ ʿayn* is an obligation on every single individual. Trans.

26 In the case in which the Muslim community is endangered by, for example, a sudden overwhelming attack or in some other manner, or when the existence of Islam itself is imperilled, then *jihād* becomes an obligation on every individual. Men, women and even children fight with or without permission of parents and husbands. The author wrote at a time when the Muslims were strong with powerful armies defending the borders. Trans.

الحَديثُ الرَّابعُ

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ ﷺ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ؛ وَهُوَ الصَّادِقُ الْمَصْدُوقُ: ﴿إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ يُجْمَعُ خَلْقُهُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا نُطْفَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ مُضْغَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يُرْسِلُ اللهُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَلَكَ، فَيَنْفُخُ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ، وَيُؤْمَرُ بِأَرْبَعِ كَلِمَاتٍ؛ بِكَتْبِ رِزْقِهِ، وَعَمَلِهِ، وَأَجَلِهِ، وَشَقِيٌّ، أَوْ سَعِيدٌ، فَوَالَّذِي لاَ إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ! إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ؛ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلاَّ ذِرَاعٌ، فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ، فَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ، فَيَدْخُلُهَا، وَإِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ؛ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلاَّ ذِرَاعٌ، فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ، فَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَيَدْخُلُهَا﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

The Decree

From Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd ﷺ there is that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us – and he is the truthful one who is confirmed, – 'The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days as a drop, then later a blood clot for the like of that, then later a morsel of flesh for the like of that. Then

the angel is sent to him and breathes the *rūḥ* (spirit) into him, and he is commanded with four words: with writing his provision, his life-span, his action, and whether he is fortunate or unfortunate. By Allah the One other than Whom there is no god, one of you will do the actions of the people of the Garden until there is only a cubit[1] between him and it, then the decree will overtake him, he will do the actions of the people of the Fire and thus enter it. One of you will do the actions of the people of the Fire until there only remains a cubit between him and it, then the decree will overtake him, he will do the actions of the people of the Garden and so enter it'." Al-Bukhārī (3208) and Muslim (2643) narrated it.

The authenticity of this hadith is agreed upon [by both al-Bukhārī and Muslim] and the Ummah has received it with acceptance. Al-Aʿmash narrated it from Zayd ibn Wahb from Ibn Masʿūd, and it was by this path that the two shaykhs [al-Bukhārī and Muslim] narrated it in their two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books.

It is narrated from Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Isfāṭī that he said, "I saw the Prophet ﷺ in that which the sleeper sees [i.e. dream], and I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, [what about] the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd which he

narrates from you saying, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us – and he is the truthful one who is confirmed…”?’ He said ﷺ ‘By the One Whom there is no god but Him, I told him it, I did,’ saying that three times, and then he said, ‘May Allah forgive al-Aʿmash because he narrated it, and may Allah forgive whoever narrated it before al-Aʿmash and whoever narrated it after him.’”[2]

It has been narrated from Ibn Masʿūd in other ways.

As for his words ﷺ “The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days as a drop,” their explanation is narrated from Ibn Masʿūd. Al-Aʿmash narrated from Khaythamah that Ibn Masʿūd said, “When the drop falls into the womb she conceives in every hair and nail. Then it remains for forty days and then it descends into the womb and becomes a clot.” He said, “That is its ‘gathering’.” Ibn Abī Ḥātim and others narrated it.

A different explanation of ‘gathered’ has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī, and Ibn Mandah in the *Kitāb at-tawḥīd*, narrated the hadith of Mālik ibn al-Ḥuwayrith that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When Allah, exalted is He, wants to create a slave,

and then the man makes love to the woman, his water becomes scattered in every one of her vessels and limbs. On the seventh day, Allah, exalted is He, collects it and presents it with every one of its hereditary characteristics,[3] except for Ādam[4],

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ

"...and assembled you in whatever way He willed."[5] [6] Ibn Mandah said that its chain of transmission is well known and unbroken according to the criteria of Abū ʿĪsā [at-Tirmidhī], an-Nasā'ī and others.

Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated by way of Muṭahhir ibn al-Haytham from Mūsā ibn ʿUlā ibn Rabāḥ from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said to his grandfather, "So and so, what child was born to you?" He said, "Messenger of Allah, what was it that was probable to have been born to me? Either a boy or a girl." He said, "Who does it resemble?" He said, "Who would it most probably resemble? Either its mother or father." He said that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let none of you say anything like this! When the drop is settled in the

womb, Allah presents it with every kin relationship between it and Ādam. Have you not read this *āyah*, '...and assembled you in whatever way He willed'[7]?." He said [it means], "He makes you to travel."[8] This is a weak chain of transmission, and Muṭahhir ibn al-Haytham is extremely weak. Al-Bukhārī said, "It is a hadith which is not sound, and it has been mentioned about its chain of transmission from Mūsā ibn ʿUlā from his father that his father did not accept Islam until the time of Abū Bakr as-Siddiq ﷺ," meaning that he was not a Companion. Something that testifies to this same meaning are the words of the Prophet ﷺ to the one who said to him, "My wife has given birth to a black boy." He said, "Perhaps, he inclines to some ancestral characteristic[9]."[10]

His words, "Then later a blood clot (*ʿalaqah*) for the like of that," means for forty days, and the *ʿalaqah* is a piece of blood.

"Then later a morsel of flesh (*muḍghah*) for the like of that," means for forty days, and the *muḍghah* is a piece of meat.

"Then Allah sends the angel to him and he breathes the *rūḥ* into him, and he is commanded with four

words: with writing his provision, his life-span, his action, and whether he is fortunate or unfortunate."

This hadith shows that it [the drop] transforms during one hundred and twenty days through three stages, in each forty days of which it is in a stage. In the first forty days it is a drop, then in the second period of forty days a blood clot, then in the third period of forty days a morsel of flesh, and then after the one hundred and twentieth day the angel breathes the *rūḥ* into it and writes these four phrases down for it.

Allah, exalted is He, mentions in very many places in the Qur'ān the transformation of the embryo in these stages, such as in His words, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

"Mankind! if you are in any doubt about the Rising, know that We created you from dust then from a drop of sperm then from a clot of blood then from a lump of flesh, formed yet unformed, so We may make

things clear to you. We make whatever We want stay in the womb until a specified time."[11]

He mentions these three stages: the drop, the blood-clot and the morsel of flesh, in numerous places in the Qur'ān, and in one other place He mentions an additional term, for He says in Sūrat al-Mu'minūn:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

"We created man from the purest kind of clay; then made him a drop in a secure receptacle; then formed the drop into a clot and formed the clot into a lump and formed the lump into bones and clothed the bones in flesh; and then brought him into being as another creature. Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators!"[12]

These are seven periods of time which Allah mentions in this *āyah* for the formation of the son of Ādam before the breathing of the *rūḥ* into him. Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "The son of Ādam was created from seven," and then he recited this *āyah*. He was asked about withdrawal [of the penis in intercourse before ejaculation as a contraceptive measure] and he recited

his *āyah*, and then said, “Is anyone created until this description has happened?” In another version from him, he said, “Does any person die until he has passed through this creation?”[13]

It has been narrated that Rifāʿah ibn Rāfiʿ said, “‘Umar, ʿAlī, az-Zubayr and Saʿd and a whole group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat down with me and discussed the withdrawal method of contraception. They said, ‘There is no harm in it.’ One man said, ‘They claim that it is a lesser case of child-murder[14].’ ʿAlī ﷺ said, ‘It is not child-murder until it has passed through theseven periods of time: it must be the purest extractofclay, then adrop, then a blood-clot, then a morsel of flesh, then bones, then flesh and then another creation.’ ʿUmar ﷺ said, ‘You have told the truth, may Allah lengthen your remaining [with us]!’”[15] Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it in *al-Mu’talif wa’l-mukhtalif*.

A party of the people of *fiqh* make an allowance for women to abort what is in their wombs as long as the *rūḥ* has not been breathed into it and regard it as equivalent to the withdrawal method of contraception, but this is a weak position, because the embryo is a child which is becoming knit together and which

probably has become formed, whereas with withdrawal there is no child at all but it causes the prevention of its even beginning to knit together. It may be that withdrawal will not prevent the beginning of the formation if Allah wishes to create it, as the Prophet ﷺ said when he was asked about withdrawal, "There is nothing against you if you do not withdraw. There is no self brought forth but that Allah is its Creator."[16] Our colleagues clearly declare that when the child becomes a blood-clot, the woman is not permitted to abort it, because it is a child which has begun the process of coagulation, as opposed to a drop which has not yet begun to coagulate and which may not knit together as a child.

In some versions of the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ the mention of the [stage of the] bones is narrated, and that it will be [in the stage of being] bones for forty days. Imam Aḥmad narrated a version from ʿAlī ibn Zayd, "I heard Abū ʿUbaydah narrating saying, "ʿAbdullāh said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The drop is in the womb for forty days unchanging in that state, and then when the forty pass it becomes a blood-clot, then later a morsel of flesh for the like of that, then bones for the like of that. Then when Allah,

exalted is He, wishes to perfect its creation Allah sends an angel to him...""""[17]

It is narrated as a hadith of ʿĀṣim from Abū Wā'il from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the drop becomes settled in the womb it is a drop for forty nights, then it is a blood-clot for forty nights, then it is bones for forty nights, then later Allah clothes the bones in flesh."[18]

The narration of Imam Aḥmad shows that the embryo is not clothed in flesh until after one hundred and sixty days, and this is wrong without any doubt, because there is no doubt that after one hundred and twenty days the *rūḥ* is breathed into it as we will mention. [The narrator] ʿAlī ibn Zayd is [ʿAlī ibn Zayd] ibn Jadʿān and he may not be used as a proof. That which shows that the formation of the bones and flesh happens in the beginning of the second forty days has been narrated in a hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Hudahyfah ibn Usayd that the Prophet ﷺ, said, "When forty-two nights have passed for the drop, Allah sends an angel to it who forms it and creates its hearing and sight, its skin, flesh and bones, and then asks, 'Lord, is it a male or a female?' And your Lord decrees what He wills

which the angel writes down. Then later he asks, 'Lord, what is its life-span?' and your Lord says what He wishes which the angel writes down. Then the angel asks, 'Lord, what is its provision?' So your Lord decrees what He wills and the angel writes it down. Then the angel comes out with the page in its hand, and it has not added anything extra to what it was commanded [to write] or left anything out."[19]

The apparent sense of this hadith shows that the formation of the embryo and the creation of its hearing, sight, skin, flesh and bones is at the beginning of the second period of forty days, so it requires that in the second forty days it is flesh and bones.

One person interpreted that as meaning that the angel divides up the drop when it becomes a clot into different portions, some of which it makes into skin, some into flesh, and some into bones all of which is decreed before its existence, but this contradicts the outward meaning of the hadith, because the apparent outward meaning of it is that he forms and creates all of these parts, but the creation and formation and division of that may be before the existence of the flesh and bones and it may be in some embryos and not others.

The preceding hadith of Mālik ibn al-Ḥuwayrith shows that the formation happens in the drop on the seventh day, and Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ

"We created man from a mingled drop to test him,"[20] and a party of the right-acting first generations explained the 'mingling' of the drop as referring to the inherited characteristics that are in it. Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said, "Its mingled nature is its inherited characteristics."[21] Scholarly medical people mention something that accords with that, for they say that when the sperm reaches the womb it churns and froths for six or seven days, and in these days the drop forms without help from the womb, but then after that it receives help from it. The beginning of the lines and points are three days after this, give or take a day. Then after six days, which is the fifteenth day from the moment of adhesion [to the wall of the womb], the blood passes through to all of it so that it becomes a blood-clot. Then the limbs become outwardly distinct and each of them withdraws from contact with the others and the moistness of the spinal cord becomes

stretched out. Then after nine days the head becomes distinct on the shoulders and the fingertips on the fingers in a way which is clear in some but not yet in others.

They say that the shortest period in which the male becomes distinct is thirty days and the average time for the formation of the embryo is thirty-five days up to forty-five days. They say that a complete male is not to be found in miscarried foetuses before thirty days, nor a female before forty days, which is in accordance with what the hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd indicates, that the formation happens in the second period of forty days in which it also becomes flesh.

Some interpret the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd as meaning that the embryo is predominantly of the nature of the drop of sperm in the first forty days, and then predominantly of the nature of the blood-clot, then in the third period of forty days it is predominantly of the nature of the morsel of flesh even if it's fully made and formed, and there is no mention in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd of a time for the embryo's being given its form.

That which shows that the formation takes place before the second forty days is narrated from Ibn

Masʿūd himself, because ash-Shaʿbī narrated from ʿAlqamah that Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said, “When the drop is settled in the womb an angel comes to it who takes it in the palm of his hand and asks, ‘My Lord, [is it to be] complete or incomplete?’ If it is said, ‘Incomplete,’ it will not become a person and the womb casts it out as blood. If it is said, ‘Complete,’ he asks, ‘My Lord is it male or female, unfortunate or fortunate, what is its life-span and what are its footprints, and in what land will it die?’” He said, “Then the drop is asked, ‘Who is your Lord?’ And it will answer, ‘Allah.’ It will be asked, ‘Who is your Provider?’ And it will answer, ‘Allah.’ Then it will be said [to the angel], ‘Go to the Book, for you will find the story of this drop in it.’” He said, “Then it is created, and it will live its life, eat its provision and walk on its own footprints, until when its prescribed term comes, it will die and be buried in that [land in which it was written that it would die].” Then ash-Shaʿbī recited [this *āyah*], “Mankind! if you are in any doubt about the Rising, know that We created you from dust then from a drop of sperm then from a clot of blood then from a lump of flesh, formed yet unformed…”[22] “Then if the morsel of flesh attains that [state], it changes its manner of being to the

fourth [stage of its] creation and becomes a person. If it is incomplete the womb casts it out as blood, but if it is complete it changes its manner of being into a person."[23] Ibn Abī Ḥātim and others narrated it.

It has been narrated in another way from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that there is no formation until after eighty days, because as-Suddī narrated from Abū Mālik and from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ and from Murrah al-Hamdānī from Ibn Masʿūd and from other people from the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ concerning His words ﷻ:

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ

"It is He who forms you in the womb however He wills."[24] that he said, "When the drop comes into the womb it becomes dispersed through the body for forty days, and then it becomes a blood-clot for forty days, then it becomes a morsel of flesh for forty days. Then when it attains [the point of] being formed, Allah sends an angel to it which gives it its form, the angel comes bringing dust between two of its fingers which it mixes with the morsel of flesh and then kneads it with it, and then forms it as it is told asking, 'Is it a

male or a female? Is it unfortunate or fortunate? What is its provision and its lifespan, its footprints and its misfortunes?' Allah, blessed is He and exalted, will speak and the angel will write it. When that body dies it will be buried in the place from which that dust was taken." Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated it in his commentary on the Qur'ān, but there are different views on as-Suddī. Imam Aḥmad used to reject his ascribing numerous chains of transmission (*isnāds*) to a single piece of *tafsīr*, just as he and others rejected al-Wāqidī's ascription of numerous chains of transmission to a single hadith[25].

A group of the people of *fiqh* take their position based on the apparent outward meaning of his version and then they interpret the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd which he attributed [to the Prophet ﷺ] on the basis of it. They said that the shortest period in which the form of the child becomes clear is eighty-one days since it is not a morsel of flesh until the third [period of] forty, and it does not have its form before it is a morsel of flesh.

Our people [the Ḥanbalīs] and ash-Shāfiʿī's people say on the basis of this source that the *ʿiddah* period [of divorce] does not come to an end, nor is the slave-

woman who is a mother of her owner's child set free except [when the embryo reaches the stage of] the morsel of flesh which has gained human form, and the least period of time in which it is possible for it to be formed and fashioned is eighty-one days.

Aḥmad ﷺ said about the blood-clot, "It is blood in which the form is not yet apparent." If the morsel of flesh is unformed, then does the *ʿiddah* period come to an end because of it, and does the slave-woman who is the mother of her owner's child become [legally] pregnant? On this there are two positions based on two different narrations from Aḥmad. If the delineation [of the form] has not become clear in it except lightly and indistinctly, which no one knows but experienced women, then if they bear witness to that, their testimony is accepted, and there is no difference whether this happens after or before four complete months according to most of the people of knowledge, and Imam Aḥmad clearly took that stand in the version narrated from a great number of his colleagues, but his son Ṣāliḥ narrated that the form of the infant becomes clear in four [months, i.e. three periods of forty days].

Ash-Shaʿbī said, “If it is miscarried (*nukisa*) in the fourth [stage of] creation and it is fully formed, then by that the *ʿiddah* period is terminated, and the slave-woman [who is pregnant by her owner] is set free, if it is after four months.” Similarly, Ḥanbal narrated from him, “If the slave-woman who is pregnant by her owner has a miscarriage, then if it is fully formed she is set free, and the *ʿiddah* period is terminated when it enters on the fourth stage of its formation in four months in which the *rūḥ* is breathed into it.” However, this contradicts what the majority narrate from him. Aḥmad said, in one narration from him, “If its form is clear there is no disagreement that if she is a slave-woman she is set free.” A group narrate from him also that if it becomes clear that the blood-clot is a child, slave-women are freed because of that, and that was also the position of an-Nakhaʿī and is said to be a position that ash-Shāfiʿī took. Some of our people also refute and reject this narration from Aḥmad on the termination of the *ʿiddah* because of it. All of this is based on the fact that it is possible for the formation to take place in the stage of the blood-clot, as is derived from the aforementioned hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd, except that some say that the hadith of

Ḥudhayfah only shows that it takes on form when it becomes flesh and bones which may happen in the second forty [days], not in the state when it is a blood-clot, and on that there are different views and Allah knows best.

That which the doctors mention shows that the blood clot takes on a form and an outline, and similarly women midwives bear witness to that. The hadith of Mālik ibn al-Ḥuwayrith also testifies to formation taking place in the state when the embryo is a drop, and Allah, exalted is He, knows best. There remains in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that after its becoming a morsel of flesh the angel is sent to it and writes the four phrases and breathes the *rūḥ* into it, all of which happens after one hundred and twenty days.

The wordings of the different versions of this hadith vary in the order of the writing [of the destiny] and the breathing [of the rūḥ]. In the version of al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* there is, “The angel is sent to him and commanded to [write] four phrases, and then later the *rūḥ* is breathed into him.” In this version there is an open declaration of the delay of the breathing of the *rūḥ* until after the writing [of the destiny]. In a version which al-Bayhaqī narrated in the

Kitāb al-Qadr (The Decree) there is, “Then the angel is sent to him and he breathes the *rūḥ* into him, then later he is commanded with the four phrases.” This version declares openly that the breathing [of the *rūḥ*] precedes the writing. So either this is the narrators’ themselves acting according to their own independent judgement in conveying the meaning they understood, or else it is just the order in which it is told and not the order in which it happens.

Anyway, the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd indicates that the breathing of the *rūḥ* into the embryo and the angels writing down his affair is delayed until after four months so that the three sets of forty days are completed. As for the breathing of the *rūḥ*, it has been narrated openly from the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that the *rūḥ* is only breathed into it after four months, just as the outward sense of the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd indicates. Zayd ibn ʿAlī narrated from his father from ʿAlī that he said, “When the drop has completed four months, Allah sends an angel to it who breathes the *rūḥ* into it in the darknesses. That is His words, exalted is He:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ

‘and then brought him into being as another creature.’[26]” Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated it, but there is a break in its chain of transmission. Al-Lālkā’ī narrated with his chain of transmission that Ibn ʿAbbās said, “When the drop falls into the womb it remains there four months and ten [days]. Then the *rūḥ* is breathed into it, and after that it remains forty nights. Then an angel is sent to it who breaks the vertex of the brain in the cavity at the nape of the neck and writes whether it is unfortunate or fortunate.”[27] There are some views about the chain of transmission. In it there is that the breathing of the *rūḥ* is delayed ten days after the four months.

Imam Aḥmad based his well known position on the apparent meaning of the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, that the infant’s *rūḥ* is breathed into it after four months, and that if it is miscarried after completing four months, the [funeral] prayer is performed over it since the *rūḥ* has been breathed into it before it died. That is also said to have been the position of Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab, and is also one of the two positions that ash-Shāfiʿī and Isḥāq took. More than one person transmitted from Aḥmad that he said, “When it reaches four months and ten days, then in those ten

days the *rūḥ* is breathed into it and the [funeral] prayer must be said over it [if there is a miscarriage]." He said, in the narration of Abū'l-Ḥārith, "The person is a drop for forty nights, a blood-clot for forty nights and a morsel of flesh for forty nights, and then it becomes bones and flesh. Then when four months and ten [days] are over, the *rūḥ* is breathed into it."

The apparent meaning of this narration is that the *rūḥ* is not breathed into it until after the completion of four months and ten [days] as has been narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās. The narrations before this from Aḥmad only indicate that the *rūḥ* is breathed into it during the ten days after the completion of the four [months], and this is the position for which he is well-known, just as Ibn al-Musayyab said when he was asked about the *ʿiddah* period for [a widow mourning the] death [of her husband] which is four months and ten [days] "What is the purpose of the ten [days]?" He said, "The *rūḥ* is breathed into it."

As for medical people, they mention that if the embryo takes on form in thirty-five days, it will move within seventy days and it will be born in two hundred and ten days, i.e. seven months, plus or minus some days in formation and birth. Then if formation

happens in forty-five days it will move in ninety days and be born after two hundred and seventy days, i.e. nine months, and Allah knows best.

As for the writing of the angel, the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd indicates that it also is after four months according to the preceding. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has charged an angel with the wombs and he says [at each stage of development], 'O my Lord, a drop! O my Lord, a blood-clot! O my Lord, a morsel of flesh!' Then when Allah intends to decree a creature, it asks, 'O my Lord, is it male or female? Is it fortunate or unfortunate? What is its provision and what is its life-span?' He writes all of that down while it is in its mother's womb."[28] The apparent meaning of this agrees with the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, but however there is no measure of the period of time. The preceding hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd indicates that the writing takes place at the beginning of the second forty [days]. Muslim also narrated the hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd with another wording which connects back to the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "The angel enters in upon the drop after it is established in the womb, forty or forty-five nights later, and asks, 'O my Lord, is it

fortunate or unfortunate?' and they are both written down. It will ask, 'O my Lord, is it male or female? and they are both written down, and he writes his deeds, his footprints, his life-span and his provision. Then the pages are rolled up and nothing is added into them or subtracted from them." In another version of Muslim's there is, "The drop is in the womb for forty nights and then the angel climbs in upon him and asks, 'O my Lord, is it a male or a female?'..." Also in another version of Muslim's there is, "...after forty and so many nights."

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is the hadith of Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the drop has been settled in the womb for forty days or forty nights the angel is sent to him and asks, 'O my Lord, is it a male or a female?' And it is informed [of that]."[29]

We have previously seen what ash-Shaʿbī narrated from ʿAlqamah from Ibn Masʿūd of his own words, the apparent meaning of which indicates that the angel is sent to him while he is a drop. It has been narrated from Ibn Masʿūd in two other ways, that he said, "Every day the actions of the descendants of Ādam are shown to Allah ﷻ and He looks into them for three

hours. Then He is brought the wombs and He looks into them for three hours, and that is in His words:

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ

'It is He who forms you in the womb however He wills,'[30] and His words:

يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ

'He gives daughters to whomever He wishes; and He gives sons to whomever He wishes.'[31] He is brought the provisions and He looks into them for three hours, and the angels glorify Him for three hours." He said, "This is some of your business and the business of your Lord." However, there are no specific times for His investigating [the events which take place in] the wombs.

It has been narrated from a group of the Companions that the writing takes place in the second forty [days]. Al-Lālkā'ī narrated with a chain of transmission that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-'As said, "When the drop rests in the woman's womb for forty nights, the angel comes to it and animates it, then

ascends with it to the All-Merciful ﷻ and says, ‘Create! O Best of Creators!’ So Allah decides about its affair what He wills and it is turned over to the angel at that, and he asks, ‘O my Lord, is it to miscarry or to go the full term?’ and He explains that to him. Then he asks, ‘O my Lord, is it to have a short life-span or a full life-span?’ and He makes that clear to him. Then he asks, ‘O my Lord, is it a single child or twins?’ and He makes that clear to him. He asks, ‘O my Lord is it a male or a female?’ and He makes that clear to him, then he asks, “O my Lord, is it fortunate or unfortunate?’ and He makes that clear to him. Then he says, ‘O my Lord, apportion his provision for him!’ and He apportions his provision for him along with his life-span, and then he [the angel] descends with both of them together. By the One in Whose hand is my self, he will not obtain anything of the world except that which has been apportioned to him.”[32]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated that Abū Dharr ﷺ said, “The sperm remains in the womb for forty nights, then the angel of the spirits[33] comes to it and ascends with it to the Compeller ﷻ and asks, ‘O my Lord, is it a male or a female?’ and so Allah ﷻ decides whatever He decides. Then he asks, ‘O my Lord, is it fortunate or

unfortunate?' and he writes whatever he will receive [in his life] in front of him." Then Abū Dharr recited the beginning of Sūrat at-Taghābun up to His words:

وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ

"...and formed you, giving you the best of forms. And He is your final destination."[34] [35]

All of this agrees with what is in the hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd. We have also seen previously from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that the writing of the angel takes place forty nights after the breathing of the *rūḥ*, but that there is some discussion on its chain of transmission.

One scholar united these different hadith and traditions and the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd by affirming that the writing happens twice, and it is said along with that that one of the two is in the heaven and the other in the womb of the mother, but what is most apparent, and Allah knows best, is that it happens once, but that it probably differs according to the different embryos, some of which have their destinies written after the first forty [days] and some after the third forty.

It has been said that the word “then” in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd only refers to the order in which it is told but not the order in which it happens, and Allah knows best.

One later scholar gives preference to the writing of the destiny occurring in the beginning of the second forty, as the hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd indicates, and he said, “Its mention is only deferred in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd until after mention of the morsel of flesh – even if he mentions it with the word “then” – so as not to interrupt the sequence of the three stages through which the embryo transforms, i.e. the fact that it is a drop, a blood-clot and a morsel of flesh, because the mention of these three stages successively is better and more wonderful.[36] For that reason he deferred mentioning the conjoined term, even though the one to which it is conjoined precedes other terms in sequence, and he sought an evidence of that from His words:

وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنسَانِ مِن طِينٍ ، ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ، ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِهِ

“He commenced the creation of man from clay; then produced his seed from an extract of base fluid;

then formed him and breathed His *Rūḥ* into him."[37] Here what is meant by 'man' is Ādam ﷺ and it is well known that his being perfected and the breathing of the *rūḥ* into him was before his progeny were made from a pure extract of a despised fluid. However, since the purpose is to mention the power of Allah ﷻ in both beginning the creation of Ādam and the creation of his progeny, then one is mentioned right after the other, and the mention of the perfecting of Ādam and of the breathing of the *rūḥ* into him is deferred even though it took place in between the creation of Ādam from clay and the creation of his progeny, and Allah knows best.

It has been narrated that this writing of the destiny is between the two eyes of the embryo. There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah creates a person, the angel of the wombs asks, 'O my Lord, is it a male or a female?'" He said, "So Allah decides his affair. Then he asks, 'O my Lord, 'Is he fortunate or unfortunate?' and so Allah decides his affair, and then he writes between his eyes what he is to receive, even the hurt in the foot he will get from a stone."[38] It has been transmitted as a tradition that stops short at Ibn ʿUmar without being

attributed directly [to the Prophet ﷺ]. The aforementioned hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd states clearly that the angel writes that in the page, but it is possible that he writes it in the page and also between the child's eyes.

It is narrated that, coupled with the writing, what comprises the child's attributes are created along with it. It is narrated from ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah wants to create a creature He sends an angel who enters the womb and asks, 'O my Lord, what is this?' and He answers that it is a boy or a girl or whatever it is that Allah wishes to create in the womb. Then he asks, 'O my Lord, is it to be fortunate or unfortunate?' so He answers whatever He wills. Then he asks, 'O my Lord, what is its life-span to be?' so He answers such and such. So he asks, 'What is its outward physical form and what are its inner characteristics?' so He answers, 'Such and such.' There is nothing but that it is created along with it in the womb." Abū Dāwūd narrated it in the *Kitāb al-Qadr* "The Book of the Decree" and al-Bazzār in his *Musnad*.[39]

In any case, this writing which is written for the embryo in its mother's womb is not the writing of the

decrees which preceded the creation of all creatures mentioned in His words, exalted is He:

مَا أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَا

"Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen"[40], and as is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr from the Prophet ﷺ, "Truly, Allah decreed the destinies of creatures fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth."[41] There is in the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The first thing that Allah created was the Pen, and He said to it, 'Write!' and so it proceeded with whatever is to be until the Day of Rising."[42]

We have previously mentioned that which is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that when the angel asks about the state of the drop he is told to go to the Book which preceded [the creation of the heaven and the earth] and it is said to him, "You will find the story of this drop in it," and there are many texts which mention the writing of the [state of] good fortune [in the Garden] or misfortune [in the Fire] before [the creation].

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There is no human being born but that Allah has written his place in the Garden or in the Fire, and has written whether he is fortunate or unfortunate.” A man asked, “Messenger of Allah, should we not then abide by our decree and give up action?” He said, “Act! For everyone will be eased to that for which he is created. As for the people of good fortune, they are eased to the deeds of the people of good fortune. As for the people of misfortune, they are eased to the deeds of the people of misfortune.” Then he recited:

فَأَمَّا مَن أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى

“As for him who gives out and has *taqwā* and confirms the Good …”[43] reciting the two *āyāt*.[44]

In this hadith there is that fortune and misfortune have previously been decreed, and that they are decreed according to the actions, and that everyone is eased to those deeds which are created for him which are the cause of his fortune or misfortune.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is that ʿImrān ibn Husayn said, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, are

the people of the Garden known [now] from the people of the Fire?' He said, 'Yes.' He asked, 'Then why do those who do deeds do them?' He said, 'Everyone acts for that for which he is created[45] or for that which is made easy for him.'"[46] This meaning has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways, and in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd there is that fortune and misfortune are according to the concluding actions [of one's life].

It has been said that his words at the end of the hadith, "Then, by the One Whom there is no god other than Him! Any of you will do the actions of the people of the Garden until there..." is actually an interpolation by Ibn Masʿūd of his own words. That is how Salamah ibn Kuhayl narrated it from Zayd ibn Wahb from Ibn Masʿūd as his words,[47] but this meaning has also been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many other ways.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from Sahl ibn Saʿd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Actions are only according to their conclusions."[48]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* there is from ʿĀ'ishah from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "Actions are only by their conclusions."[49]

In it there is also from Muʿāwiyah that he said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “Actions are only according to their conclusions, like the bag which if its upper is good then its lower is good, and if its upper is bad its lower is bad.”[50]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah, that the Prophet ﷺ said, “A man may act for a very long time with the deeds of the people of the Garden and then his actions conclude with the action of the people of the Fire. And a man may act for a very long time with the deeds of the people of the Fire and then his actions conclude with the action of the people of the Garden.”[51]

Imam Aḥmad ﷺ narrated the hadith of Anas ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “You must not marvel at anyone until you see what his conclusion is, because an active person may act for a large part of his life or for a very long time doing right actions which if he were to die while doing them he would enter the Garden, then later he changes and does an evil act. A slave may do wrong actions for a very long time which if he were to die while doing them he would enter the Fire, then later change and do right actions.”[52]

He also narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A man may do the actions of the people of the Garden whereas he is written in the Book as one of the people of the Fire, so that when it is just before his death he changes and does the action of the people of the Fire, then dies and enters the Fire. A man may do the actions of the people of the Fire, whereas he is written in the Book as one of the people of the Garden, then when it is just before his death he changes and does the action of the people of the Garden, dies and enters it."[53]

Imam Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī and at-Tirmidhī narrated the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ﷺ that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to us and in his hand there were two writings. He asked, 'Do you know what these two writings are?' We said, 'No, Messenger of Allah, only if you tell us.' He said about the one which was in his right hand, 'This is a writing from the Lord of the Worlds in which are the names of the people of the Garden and their parents' and their tribes' names up until the very last of them, so that there will never be any added into them or subtracted from them.' Then he said about the one in his left hand, 'This is a writing from the Lord of the Worlds in which are the

names of the people of the Fire, their parents' and their tribes' names up to the very last of them so that there will never be any added to them or subtracted from them.' His Companions asked, 'Then for what purpose is action, Messenger of Allah, if the matter has already been decided upon?' He said, 'Hit the mark and strive to get close to it, because the person of the Garden will have the action of the people of the Garden at his conclusion no matter what action he has done. And the person of the Fire will have the action of the people of the Fire at his conclusion no matter what other actions he has done.' Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ indicated his hands and cast them [the papers] away and said, 'Your Lord has finished with the slaves. A party are in the Garden and a party are in the Fire.'"[54]

This hadith has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it from a hadith of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib from the Prophet ﷺ and he said in addition, "The person of the Garden will have his actions concluded bythe actions of the people of the Garden, and the person of the Fire will have his actions concluded by the actions of the people of the Fire, no matter what action he has done. Sometimes,

the people of good fortune will be made to travel the path of [the people of] misfortune so much that it is said, 'How much they resemble them, no, rather they are of them!' and then good fortune will overtake them and deliver them. Sometimes, the people of misfortune will be made to travel the path of the people of good fortune so much that it is said, 'How much they resemble them, no, rather they are of them!' and then misfortune will overtake them. Whomever Allah has written as fortunate in the original of the Book,[55] He will not bring him out of the world before He employs him in some deed which will render him fortunate before his death, even if it only happens in the time between two milkings of a she-camel." Then he said, "Actions are according to their conclusions, actions are according to their conclusions."[56] Al-Bazzār narrated it in his *Musnad* with this same meaning from a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar from the Prophet ﷺ.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Sahl ibn Saʿd that the Prophet ﷺ met with people who associate partners with Allah [in battle] and among his companions there was a man who would not leave any isolated or separated [fighter] without chasing him

and striking him with his sword. They said, “Noone has sufficed today as so and so has sufficed,” so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “He is one of the people of the Fire.” One of the people said, “I will keep his company,” and so he followed him. The man was wounded severely and wanted to hasten his own death. He placed the iron head of his sword on the ground and the tip between his breasts, then he pressed down on his sword and killed himself. The man went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, “I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah,” and told him the story. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “A man may do the actions of the people of the Garden, as it appears to people, whereas he is one of the people of the Fire. A man may do the actions of the people of the Fire, as it appears to people, and he is one of the people of the Garden.” Al-Bukhārī added in a version of his, “Actions are only according to their conclusions.”[57]

His words, “As it appears to people,” indicates that the inward reality of the affair is opposite to that, and that the evil conclusion is because of an inner secret which people had not discovered, either from the point of view of an evil action [which unknown to

people the man did] and the like of that, and that characteristic necessitates an evil conclusion at death. Similarly, a man may do the actions of the people of the Fire and yet in his inward there is a hidden good characteristic which overcomes him at the end of his life, and requires that he have a good conclusion. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād said, "I attended a man on the point of death who was being prompted to say, 'There is no god but Allah.' But the last thing he said was that he disbelieved what we said, and on that he died." He said, "I asked about him and found that he was an incessant drinker of wine." ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to say, "Be careful of wrong actions because they are what overthrew him."

To sum up, concluding actions are the inheritance of what was previously ordained, all of what is previously in the first Book. For that reason, the right-acting first generations used to be terribly afraid of evil concluding actions, and some of them would grow agitated at mention of pre-ordained decrees. It has been said that the hearts of the good are attached to concluding [actions] and that they ask, "What will be our conclusion?" but that the hearts of those who are brought near [to Allah] are attached to pre-ordained

decrees and that they ask, “What has been ordained for us?”

One of the Companions wept as he was dying and he was asked about it, so he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Truly, Allah, exalted is He, grasped His creation in two handfuls and said, “These are for the Garden, and there are for the Fire,”’ and I do not know in which handful I was.”[58] One of the right-acting first generations said, “What makes the eyes weep? What makes them weep is the pre-ordained decree.”

Sufyān [ath-Thawrī] said to one of the right-acting, “Has Allah’s knowledge of you ever made you weep?” That man said to him, “You leave me in such a state that I will never rejoice.” Sufyān used to become exceedingly agitated about pre-ordained decrees and concluding actions. He used to weep and say, “I am afraid that in the core of the Book[59] I am [pre-ordained] as unfortunate.” He would weep and say, “I am afraid that *īmān* will be removed from me at death.”

Mālik ibn Dīnār used to stand the whole night grasping his beard, saying, “O my Lord, you know who is an inhabitant of the Garden and who is an

inhabitant of the Fire. In which of the two abodes is the dwelling of Mālik?"

Ḥātim al-Aṣamm said, "Whoever's heart is void of remembrance of four perils is deceived and is not safe from misfortune: first, the peril of the Day of Covenant when He said, 'These are in the Garden and I do not care, and these are in the Fire and I do not care,' for one does not know in which group one is. Second, when one was created in three-fold darkness and the angel was called to [write the decree] of misfortune or fortune, and one does not know whether one is of the unfortunate or the fortunate. Third, the remembrance of the terror of the rising, for one does not know whether one will be given the good news of the good pleasure of Allah or of His wrath. Fourth, the Day on which mankind issue forth in groups, for one does not know on which of the two paths one will be made to travel."

Sahl at-Tustarī said, "The disciple fears that he will be tried with acts of disobedience, but the gnostic fears that he will be tried with *kufr*." It was because of this that the Companions and those of the right-acting first generations who came after them used to fear for themselves hypocrisy and be extremely agitated and

anxious about it. The *mu'min* fears the lesser hypocrisy for himself and that it will overcome him upon the conclusion [of his deeds at death], and take him on to major hypocrisy, as we previously saw that hidden secret wrong actions may necessitate an evil conclusion [to one's life]. The Prophet ﷺ used to say very often in his supplications:

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

"O Overturner of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your *dīn*." Someone asked him, "Prophet of Allah, we believe in you and in what you have brought; do you fear for us?" He said, "Yes. Truly, hearts are between two of the All-Merciful's fingers ﷻ and He turns them about however He wills." Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated it from a hadith of Anas.[60]

Imam Aḥmad narrated from a hadith of Umm Salamah that, "The Prophet ﷺ used very often in his supplications to say:

اللَّهُمَّ مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

‘O Allah, Overturner of hearts, make my heart firm upon Your *dīn*.’ So I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, do hearts overturn?’ He said, ‘Yes. There is none of the creation of Allah of the mortal descendants of Ādam but that his heart is between two fingers of the All-Merciful ﷻ. If Allah ﷻ wills, He establishes him, and if He wills, He makes him deviate. So we ask Allah our Lord that He not cause our hearts to deviate after He has guided us, and we ask Him that He give us mercy from His presence, truly, He is the Ever-giving of gifts.’” She said, “I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, will you not teach me a supplication with which I can supplicate for myself?’ He said, ‘Yes, of course. Say:

اَللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ النَبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي وَأَذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قَلْبِي وَأَجِرْنِي مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ مَا أَحْيَيْتَنِي

“O Allah, Lord of the Prophet Muḥammad forgive me my wrong action and drive off the rage of my heart, and save me, as long as You cause me to live, from those things of the trials which cause one to go astray.”””[61] There are many hadith with this same meaning.

Muslim narrated from a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, ‘All of

the hearts of the descendants of Ādam are between two of the fingers of the All-Merciful ﷻ as if they were one heart; He turns them about as He wills.' Then he said

اَللَّهُمَّ مُصَرِّفَ الْقُلُوبِ صَرِّفْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ

'O Allah, Turner about of the hearts, turn our hearts to Your obedience.'"[62]

1 *Dhirāʿ* a "cubit" is the length from the finger tips to the elbow.

2 Al-Lālkā'ī narrated it in *al-Iʿtiqād*.

3 *ʿIrq* "hereditary characteristic" from all of its ancestors so that it is possible for it to manifest characteristics from very remote ancestors.

4 Ādam was created from clay.

5 Sūrat al-Infiṭār: 8

6 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (106), in *al-Awsaṭ* (1613), in *al-Kabīr* (19:290)

7 Sūrat al-Infiṭār: 8

8 Ibn Jarīr in his *tafsīr* (30:87), aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (2624)

9 i.e. a remote black ancestor.

10 Al-Bukhārī (5305), Muslim (1500)

11 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 5

12 Sūrat al-Mu'minūn: 12-14

13 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (12570)

14 A possible reference to, "when the baby girl buried alive is asked for what crime she was killed" (Sūrat at-Takwīr: 8-9)

15 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr in *at-Tamhīd* (3:148-9)

16 Al-Bukhārī (2542), Muslim (1438)

17 Aḥmad (1:374)

18 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (442), Khilāl in *as-Sunnah* (892), Tammām in *al-Fawā'id*

19 Muslim (2645)

20 Sūrat al-Insān: 2

21 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *at-Tafsīr* (29:205)

22 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 5

23 Ibn Jarīr in the *tafsīr* (17:117)

24 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 6

25 i.e. rather than narrating each hadith in its particular wording with the chain of transmission of the person who transmitted that wording.

26 Sūrat al-Mu'minūn: 14

27 Al-Lālkā'ī narrated it in *Uṣūl al-iʿtiqād*.

28 Al-Bukhārī (318 and at other places), Muslim (2646)

29 Aḥmad (3:297)

30 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 6

31 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 49

32 Al-Lālkā'ī narrated it in *Uṣūl al-iʿtiqād* (1236)

33 *Nufūs* is the plural of *nafs*, which is literally "self". However, when tranquil the self is identical to the spirit (*rūḥ*).

Trans.

34 Sūrat at-Taghābun: 3

35 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiᶜ al-bayān* (28: 119)

36 i.e. it is better and more wonderful in terms of the way it sounds and reads in the Arabic text based on the rhetorical principles of the Arabic language. Ed.

37 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 7

38 Al-Bazzār (2149), Ibn Ḥibbān (6178), Abū Yaᶜlā (15775)

39 Al-Bazzār (2151)

40 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 22

41 Muslim (2653)

42 Abū Dāwūd (4700), at-Tirmidhī (2155)

43 Sūrat al-Layl: 5

44 Al-Bukhārī (1362), Muslim (2649)

45 *limā khuliqa lahu* “for that for which he is created” or “for that which is created for him”. Trans.

46 Al-Bukhārī (6596), Muslim 2649)

47 Aḥmad (1:414)

48 Al-Bukhārī (6493, 6607)

49 Ibn Ḥibbān (340)

50 Ibn Ḥibbān (339)

51 Muslim (2651)

52 Aḥmad (3:120)

53 Aḥmad (6:107,108)

54 At-Tirmidhī (2141)

55 *Al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ* “the preserved tablet”. It is called the “original of the Book” (*Umm al-kitāb*) because it is where the

Qur'ān has originally been written down and where all the destinies of all created things have been written. Ed.

56 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*. Al-Bazzār in his *Musnad* (2156)

57 Al-Bukhārī (2898 and other places), Muslim (112). The extra text of al-Bukhārī is at (6493, 6607)

58 Aḥmad (4:176,177)

59 *Al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ*

60 At-Tirmidhī (2140), Aḥmad (3:112, 257), 84

61 Aḥmad (6:302)

62 Muslim (2654)

الحديث الخامسُ

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿مَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ لِمُسْلِمٍ: ﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلاً لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ﴾.

Innovation

The mother of the *mu'minūn*, Umm ʿAbdullāh ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Whoever introduces into this affair of ours that which is not of it, then it is rejected'." Al-Bukhārī (2697) and Muslim (1718) related it, and in a narration of Muslim's there is, "Whoever does an act on which our affair is not [based] then it is rejected."

They both published this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in the version of al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad from his aunt ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ and the wordings are different, but their meanings are close to each other. One of the wordings is "Whoever introduces into our *dīn* that which is not in it then it is rejected."

This hadith is one of the tremendous principles of Islam. Just as the hadith “Actions are only by intentions” is the scale for weighing actions in their inward then it [this hadith] is the scale for weighing them in their outward. Just as every action by which the face of Allah, exalted is He, is not intended has no reward in it for the person who does it, similarly every action on which the matter (*dīn* and *Sharīʿah*) of Allah and His Messenger is not [based] is rejected for the one who does it. Everyone who introduces into the *dīn* that for which Allah and His Messenger have not given permission has nothing to do with the *dīn*.

We will later see the hadith of al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever of you live after me will see many disagreements, so you must take hold of my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided *khulafā*’ who take the right way after me. Bite on it with the molar teeth. Beware of newly introduced matters because every newly introduced matter is an innovation, and every innovation is error.”[1] He used to say in his *khuṭbah* ﷺ, “The truest discourse is the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, and the worst of affairs are those which are newly introduced.”[2] We will delay

talking about newly introduced affairs until we encounter the hadith of al-ʿIrbāḍ indicated above. Here we will talk about actions for which there is no *Sharīʿah* command and of their rejection.

This hadith expressly states that every action on which the 'affair' of the Lawgiver is not [based] is rejected, and it indicates by implication that every action on which the 'affair' of the Lawgiver is [based] is not rejected. What is meant by his 'affair' is his *dīn* and his *Sharīʿah* as is meant by his words in another version, "Whoever introduces into this affair of ours what is not in it, then it is rejected." So that the meaning is then that whoever's action is outside of the *Sharīʿah* and is not fixed to the Sharīʿah, then it is rejected. His words, "on which our affair is not [based]" indicates that all the actions of those who act ought to be according to the judgements of the Sharīʿah, so that the judgements of the *Sharīʿah* rule over them with its command and its prohibition. Whoever's action runs according to the judgements of the *Sharīʿah* and in accordance with it, then it is acceptable, and whoever is outside of that, then it is rejected.

Actions are in two divisions: acts of worship and ordinary transactions.

As for acts of worship, those of them which are entirely outside of the judgement of Allah and His Messenger are rejected from the one who does them, and he comes under His words, exalted is He:

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَن بِهِ اللَّهُ

"Or do they have partners who have laid down a *dīn* for them for which Allah has not given any authority?"[3]

Whoever tries to draws near to Allah with an action that Allah and His Messenger did not make an act of drawing near to Allah, then his action is futile and rejected, and his state is like the state of those whose prayer at the House[4] was like whistling and clapping hands.[5] This is like those who attempt to draw near to Allah by listening to entertainment, or by dancing, or by baring the head outside of the *iḥrām* [of the Ḥajj], and suchlike newly introduced matters which Allah and His Messenger did not legislate as means of drawing near.

Something which is a means of drawing near in one act of worship is not necessarily so in other circumstances. The Prophet ﷺ saw a man standing in the sun, and he asked about him. Someone said, “He vowed to stand without sitting, not to seek shade and to fast.” The Prophet ﷺ ordered him to sit down, to shade himself and to complete his fast.[6] He did not consider his standing and going out into the sun an act of drawing near [to Allah] the vows for which he should fulfil [as vows must be fulfilled or else expiation made for them]. It has been narrated that was on the day of Jumu’ah during listening to the *khuṭbah* of the Prophet ﷺ while he was on the mimbar, and that he vowed to stand without sitting or seeking shade as long as the Prophet ﷺ was delivering the *khuṭbah*. The Prophet ﷺ did not regard that an act of drawing near [to Allah] the vow for which should be fulfilled, even though standing itself is an act of worship in other places such as for the prayer, the call to prayer and during supplication at ʿArafah, and going out into the sun is an act of drawing near for the one who is in *iḥrām*. It thus shows that not everything which is an act of drawing near in one situation is also an act of drawing near in every situation. One only

follows in that everything which derives from the *Sharīʿah* in its [appropriate] places. It is similar with respect to those who attempt to draw near [to Allah] with acts of worship which are particularly prohibited, such as fasting the day of *ʿĪd*, or praying at a time when it is forbidden [such as during the rising and setting of the sun].

As for whoever does an action which is originally a part of the *Sharīʿah* and an act of drawing near and then introduces something that is not a part of the *Sharīʿah* into it or falls short in something that is part of the *Sharīʿah*, then this contradicts the *Sharīʿah* according to the measure he falls short or introduces something new into it. The question is whether his action is entirely rejected or not. On this there is no absolute statement as to its acceptance or rejection. Rather it has to be looked into and if that in which he fell short is part of the action or one of its preconditions [the omission of which] requires the act's invalidation in the *Sharīʿah* such as someone who falls short in the obligations of purification for the prayer even though able to do it, or someone who neglects bowing or prostration or settling in those positions with stillness, then his act is rejected. He

must repeat it if it was an obligation. If that in which he falls short does not necessarily result in the invalidation of his act, such as someone who fails to attend the obligatory prayer with other people – according to those who regard it as a duty but not a precondition [that one attend the obligatory prayer in the mosque with the community] – then one does not say that this person's action is entirely rejected but that it has serious shortcomings.

If someone adds something which is not of the *Sharīʿah* into an act of the *Sharīʿah*, then the extra is rejected, meaning that it is not an act of drawing near [to Allah] and he will not be rewarded for it. Sometimes the act is entirely invalidated so that it is rejected, such as someone who deliberately adds an extra *rakʿah* in his prayer, for example. Sometimes it is not entirely invalidated and rejected, such as someone who makes *wuḍū'* [washing each limb] four times, or fasts night and day continuously. Sometimes some of that which he is commanded to do in the act of worship is exchanged for something else which is forbidden, such as the person who covers his nakedness with clothing which is forbidden, or performs *wuḍū'* for the prayer with water which has

been forcibly expropriated, or performs the prayer on land which has been forcibly expropriated. On all of these the people of knowledge have different views as to whether his action is entirely rejected or whether it is not rejected, and whether he has discharged his obligation by it. Most of the people of *fiqh* take the position that it is not entirely rejected. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī was told the story of some of the people of the science of *kalām* called the *Shimariyyah* – they were colleagues of Abū Shimar – who said, "Whoever prays dressed in clothing in the price of which there is one *ḥarām* dirham must repeat the prayer." He said, "I have not heard anything uglier than what they say. We ask Allah for safety and soundness." ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī was one of the great men of *fiqh* of the people of hadith who studied closely the sayings of the right-acting first generations. He rejected this saying of theirs and regarded it as an innovation. That shows that he did not know of any one of the right-acting first generations who thought that one should repeat the prayer for the like of this. A similar situation is performing the Ḥajj with *ḥarām* money. It has been narrated in a hadith that it [the Ḥajj] of such a person is rejected, but the hadith is not

firmly established, and the people of knowledge differ as to whether the obligatory [Ḥajj] is discharged by it or not.

A very similar situation exists in the slaughter of animals [by cutting across the jugular veins] with an instrument which is forbidden, or with the slaughter done by someone who is not permitted to slaughter, such as a thief. Most of the people of knowledge say that his slaughter is permissible, but some of them say that it is forbidden. There is a similar disagreement about the person in *iḥrām* [for Ḥajj or *ʿUmrah*] slaughtering [by cutting across the jugular veins] an animal which had been hunted, but in this case the position taken is more well-known and clear that it is forbidden, since it is specifically forbidden [in the Qur'ān].

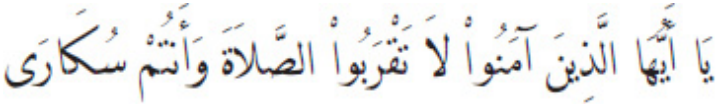
For this reason, those of the people of knowledge who make a distinction, distinguish between whether the prohibition is because of some meaning particularly connected to the act of worship thus invalidating it, or whether it is not particularly connected to it and thus does not invalidate it. Prayer with the presence of physical impurities, or without purification, or without covering of the private parts,

or directed away from the *qiblah*, all invalidate the prayer because the prohibition is directly connected to the prayer [and all these matters are expressly prohibited in the prayer], as opposed to prayer associated [for example] with something taken wrongfully by force. Something which testifies to the truth of that is that the fast is not invalidated except by embarking on something which is forbidden with respect to it, particularly such as anything of the category of eating, drinking and sexual intercourse, as opposed to that which the fasting person is prohibited – not particularly associated with the fast itself – such as lying and backbiting, according to the majority.

The Ḥajj is similar: nothing invalidates it except that which is particularly prohibited in the state of *iḥrām*, i.e. sexual intercourse. Things that are not definitely associated with the state of *iḥrām*, but which are *ḥarām* in themselves, such as killing, stealing and drinking wine, do not invalidate the Ḥajj.

Again, *iʿtikāf* [retreat within the mosque, particularly for the last days of Ramaḍān] is only invalidated by that which is particularly forbidden during it, i.e. sexual intercourse. It is only invalidated by intoxication according to us and to the majority [of

people of knowledge] because the intoxicated person is forbidden to come near the mosque and enter it, according to one of the two interpretations of His words, exalted is He:



"You who have *īmān*! do not approach the prayer when you are drunk," (Sūrat an-Nisa: 43) which is that what is meant is '[do not approach] the places of the prayer', so that he [the intoxicated person] is similar to the woman in her period [who is also not to enter the mosque]. *I ʿtikāf* is not invalidated by any other great wrong actions according to us and to most of the people of knowledge although a number of the right-acting first generations disagree, of whom were ʿAṭā', az-Zuhrī, ath-Thawrī, and Mālik, and it has also been said that it was the position of others as well.

As for the ordinary transactions of everyday life, such as contracts and revoking contracts, etc., those which alter *Sharīʿah* usages such as changing the prescribed punishment for adultery to a fine, are entirely rejected, and ownership cannot be transferred because of them, because this is unknown in the

judgements of Islam. What proves that is that the Prophet ﷺ spoke to someone who told him, “My son was employed by so and so and he committed adultery with his wife, so I ransomed him with a hundred sheep and a servant.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “The hundred sheep and the servant are returned to you, and your son must be given a hundred lashes and exiled for a year.”[7]

Whatever contract is forbidden in the *Sharīʿah*, whether it is [forbidden] because that which is contracted for is not acceptable, or because of the absence of a prerequisite, or because of an injustice which will affect either one of the two parties, or because the contract will keep someone away from the obligatory remembrance of Allah ﷻ when little time is available,[8] or for some other reason, then whether this contract is entirely rejected and ownership cannot be transferred by means of it or not is a matter with which people have struggled a great deal. That is because in some forms it is related that it is rejected and that it does not transfer ownership, but in some others that it does transfer it, and so there has been about a great deal of controversy concerning it. What is closest, if Allah, exalted is He, wills, is that if that

which is forbidden is forbidden because of one of Allah's rights, exalted is He, then it definitely does not transfer ownership. The significance of its being a right of Allah is that it cannot be absolved even by the agreement of the two contracting parties.

However, if that which is forbidden is so because of the right of a specific human being so that it is cleared with his agreement, then it depends on his agreement to it. If he is contented, the contract is binding and ownership endures, but if he is not contented with it, he is allowed to annul it.

If the contentment of the one who is affected detrimentally is not reckoned at all, such as a wife in the case of divorce and a slave in the case of setting free, then neither his acceptance or rejection is reckoned with.

If the prohibition is out of consideration for the person being prohibited in particular because of the inconvenience he will suffer, and he himself disagrees and accepts the inconvenience, then the deed is not invalidated by that.

As for the first it has many forms:

Of which there is marriage to someone whom it is forbidden to marry, either specifically, such as those to

whom marriage is forever forbidden through some cause [e.g. a triple divorce] or through kinship or because he already has four wives, or lacks one of the prerequisites of marriage which cannot be relinquished by the mutual consent of the partners, such as marrying a woman during her *ʿiddah* period [after divorce or being widowed] or who is in *iḥrām*,[9] marriage without the [agreement of the woman's] guardian, etc. It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ separated a man and the woman he had married while pregnant, and so he rejected the marriage because it had happened within the *ʿiddah* period [from her first marriage].[10]

There are also usurious contracts which do not convey ownership and we are commanded to reject them and return them, for the Prophet ﷺ told the one who sold a *ṣāʿ* [four double handfuls] of dates in exchange for two *ṣāʿs*, to return it.[11]

There is also the sale of wine, meat which has not been slaughtered according to the Islamic *Sharīʿah* (*maytah* – literally 'dead'), pork, idols and dogs, and all the other things which it is forbidden to sell, with respect to which the mutual consent of the two parties is not acceptable.

As for the second, it has many forms such as the guardian marrying off the woman whom he is only permitted to marry off with her permission but he does so without her permission. The Prophet ﷺ rejected the marriage of a woman who had already been married [then divorced or widowed] when her father married her off against her will.[12] It is also narrated that he ﷺ gave another woman who had been married off without her permission the right to choose.[13] Regarding the invalidation of this marriage and its dependences upon consent [from the girl married off] there are two narrations from Aḥmad.

A group of people of knowledge take the position that someone who deals on behalf of another person in his property without his permission, that his dealing by his own independent judgement is not invalid in principle, rather its permissibility is suspended. They seek proof from the hadith of ʿUrwah ibn al-Jaʿd when he bought two sheep for the Prophet ﷺ whereas he was only asked to buy one sheep, and then later he sold one of them and the Prophet ﷺ accepted it.[14] Imam Aḥmad applied that specifically, in that standpoint for which he is well known, to someone who transacted on behalf of someone else with that

person's property and by his permission but acted contrary to the permission he had been given.

Another example of this category is the question whether the [terminally] sick person's transacting with all of his wealth is entirely invalid or his transaction on the two thirds [that belong to his inheritors after his death] will be dependent upon the permission of his heirs. On this there is a very well known difference of opinion among the people of *fiqh* and a disagreement in the schools of Aḥmad and others. It is a sound tradition that a case was brought to the Prophet ﷺ of a man who, having no other property, freed six slaves just before his death. He ﷺ called them and separated them into three groups, freed two of the slaves and re-enslaved four of them, and he spoke severely to him.[15] Maybe the heirs had not permitted the freeing of all of the slaves, and Allah knows best.

Of this category is the sale of someone who deceives [by omitting to mention a defect, etc.] and the like. For example, there is the one who ties up the udder of a camel which is for sale several days before the sale so that it is large and gives the impression of yielding much milk, or someone outside a transaction

who praises the goods for sale or even bids for them, only in order to raise the price or tempt the buyer to conclude the sale, or the towns-person who goes out to meet the country-person on his way to the town in order to deceive him about the market price of his goods and buy from him at a cheaper price than the market price, etc. There is considerable disagreement about the acceptability of all of these transactions in the school of Aḥmad. A group of the people of hadith take the position that they are all invalid and rejected. The correct position is that they are sound if the one who receives some hurt or loss from it subsequently grants permission. It is narrated authentically from the Prophet ﷺ that he gave a free choice [to accept or reject the sale] to someone who had bought a camel whose udder had been tied in order to give the impression that it yielded copious quantities of milk, and when the people from the country who had been met outside of the town by someone who misled them about the market price arrived at the market he gave them free choice [to accept or reject the transaction],[16] all of which shows that they are not necessarily rejected. The hadith about the camel whose udder had been tied up was narrated to one of

those who declare these transactions completely invalid, and no reply is recorded of him.

As for the towns-person selling on behalf of the country person,[17] those who regard it as a sound transaction see it as one of the above types. Those who regard it as invalid consider all the people of the city as being those who have a right concerning it [to grant permission for it] and they cannot be united together (for their permission to be sought) making it inconceivable for their rights to be waived, so it becomes similar to the right of Allah ﷻ.

Another example is the sale of slaves whom it is not permitted to separate and whom the seller does separate, such as a mother and child. Does this sale become invalid and is it to be rejected, or does it depend on their acceptance? It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ commanded the rejection of this sale.[18] Aḥmad clearly stated that it is not acceptable to separate them even if they are contented with it. A group took the position that it is permissible to separate them if they accept, of whom were an-Nakhaʿī and ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿAnbarī, and according to this, it tends towards the position that it is sound depending on their acceptance of it.

Another example is if someone singles out one of his children for a gift apart from the others [whereas it is commanded to give equally to one's children]. There is a sound transmission from the Prophet ﷺ to the effect that he told Bashīr ibn Saʿd, when he singled out his son an-Nuʿmān for a gift, that he should take it back.[19] However, it does not show that ownership was not transferred to the son, because this gift is a sound transaction and takes place out of deference. If he then treats his children equally in terms of gifts [by giving the others the same as he gave to the one child] or takes back what he gave to the one child, it is acceptable. If he dies and had done neither of those things, then Mujāhid said that it is a part of his inheritance [to be divided among his heirs], and that has been said to be the position of Aḥmad and others, and that the gift is invalid. The majority took the position that it is not invalid. As to whether the heirs have the right of having it returned or not, there are two well-known positions both of which are narrated of Aḥmad.

Another example is also the types of divorce which are forbidden such as divorcing a woman during her menstrual period, because it is said that it is

forbiddenbecauseofthehusband'srightsince itis fearedthathewillsubsequently regret it. If someone is forbidden something out of concern for his welfare but he does not refrain from it, but rather does it and undertakes the difficulties that it entails, then one cannot give the judgement that what he did is invalid. For example, someone who fasts while he is ill or on a journey, or fasts day after day without some days when he does not fast, or someone who gives away all of his property and then sits begging from people, or the sick person who prays standing even though it causes him harm, or bathes even though he has good cause to fear that it will make him ill or cause his death and even then does not take advantage of the option of doing tayammum, or someone who fasts for long periods without ever breaking his fast, or prays all night without sleeping. The case of someone who says three divorces at one time is similar to all of those according to the position [of the majority] that it is forbidden [i.e. the divorce is valid and irrevocable even though the form is forbidden].

Some say that it is forbidden to divorce a woman during her menstrual period because of the woman's right because of the difficulty it will cause her by

lengthening the ʿ*iddah* period. If she is contented with it and had asked for the divorce and provided material compensation [to her husband] during her period, so then does that remove the prohibition? On this there are two well known positions among the people of knowledge. What is well known in our school and in the school of ash-Shāfiʿī is that the prohibition is removed because of that. If anyone says that the prohibition in it is indeed in order to protect the husband's right, so that if he himself dares to do it he has relinquished his right and so [the prohibition] is dropped. If he [the husband] justifies himself [by the argument] that [the prohibition] is in order to protect the wife's right, then nevertheless neither does that prevent its execution and its taking place, because the woman's acceptance [or rejection] of the divorce is not considered by any of the Muslims, except for a few Shīʿah and the like disagreeing on that. It is similar to the fact that a slave's acceptance [or rejection] is not a factor in his being freed, even if he suffers hardship because it (being freed). However, if a woman faces hardship from it [her divorce] and something remains of her divorce [if it is not a final divorce] then he is commanded to take her back just as the Prophet ﷺ

told Ibn ʿUmar to take his wife back in order to rectify the harm he had done her, and in order to rectify the forbidden form of divorce that he had used, so that her separation from him would not come about from a *ḥarām* form of divorce, and so that he would be able to divorce her in a permitted fashion and her separation from him would take place in this way. It has been narrated from Abū'z-Zubayr from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ returned her to him and did not regard it [the divorce] as being valid.[20] This is something that Abū'z-Zubayr alone narrated among all the companions of Ibn ʿUmar, such as his son Salim and his *mawlā* Nāfiʿ, Anas, Ibn Sīrīn, Ṭāwus, Yūnus ibn Jubayr, ʿAbdullāh ibn Dīnār, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Maymūn ibn Mihrān and others.

The leaders of the people of knowledge of hadith and *fiqh* reject this wording of Abū'z-Zubayr and say that he alone narrates something which contradicts trustworthy narrators. Therefore, what he alone narrates is not accepted, because what the body of people narrate from Ibn ʿUmar shows in many ways that the Prophet ﷺ reckoned it to be a [valid] divorce. Ibn ʿUmar used to say to men who asked him about divorce during a woman's menstrual period, "If you

have divorced her once or twice, then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told me to do that," i.e. to take her back, "and if you divorced her three times, then you have disobeyed your Lord and your wife is separated from you [irrevocably]."[21]

In the narration of Abū'z-Zubayr there is another extra part, on which people do not agree, which is that he said, "Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ

'O Prophet! When any of you divorce women, divorce them during their period of purity and calculate their *ʿiddah* carefully.'"[22] None of the other narrators mentioned this of Ibn ʿUmar, but ʿAbdullāh ibn Dīnār narrated that Ibn ʿUmar used to recite this *āyah* when he narrated this hadith, and this is what is authentic.

A group of people think that Ibn ʿUmar's divorce was a threefold divorce, and that the Prophet, only returned her to him because divorce cannot take place during the menstrual period, and this has also been narrated of Abū'z-Zubayr in the transmission of Muʿāwiyah ibn ʿAmmār ad-Duhnī. Abū'z-Zubayr must

have thought that this was true and thus he narrated this wording with the meaning he understood it to have. Ibn Lahīʿah narrated this hadith from Abū'z-Zubayr and said, "It is from Jābir that Ibn ʿUmar divorced his wife while she was in her menstrual period, and the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Let him take her back because she is his wife,'" and he was mistaken in mentioning Jābir in this chain of transmission, and he is the only one who mentions his words, "for she is his wife," and it does not proves that divorce does not take place unless one assumes that it was a triple divorce [in one pronouncement]. There is disagreement about this hadith [narrated by] Abū'z-Zubayr, but, Ibn ʿUmar's companions – who were trustworthy memorisers who knew him well and kept his company constantly – do not differ among themselves about it. Ayyūb narrated that Ibn Sīrīn said, "I spent twenty years with people of whom I had no suspicion, telling me that Ibn ʿUmar divorced his wife three times [in one pronouncement] while she was in her menstrual period, and that the Prophet ﷺ told him to take her back. I never came to suspect them and I didn't know the hadith until I met Abū Ghallāb Yūnus ibn Jubayr, who was very trustworthy,

and he told me that he had asked Ibn ʿUmar who had told him that he had divorced her one time." Muslim narrated it.

In another version, Ibn Sīrīn said, "I came to recognise that the hadith had no validity nor could I understand it."

This shows that it had spread among trustworthy people, who were not people of *fiqh* and knowledge, that Ibn ʿUmar's divorce had been threefold. So it seems likely that Abū'z-Zubayr had been one of those people. It was for that reason that Nāfiʿ was asked repeatedly about whether Ibn ʿUmar's divorce was threefold or single. When Nāfiʿ came to Makkah, they sent to him from the assembly of ʿAṭā' to ask him about it because of this ambiguity. Ibn Sīrīn's denial of the version about the threefold divorce shows that he did not know any person seriously to be reckoned with who said that the forbidden form of divorce [such as divorcing in the menstrual period or the triple divorce] does not take effect, and that this position is invalid.

When Imam Aḥmad, in the version of Abū'l-Ḥārith, was asked about someone who says that the forbidden forms of divorce do not take effect because the man is

acting contrary to that which he is commanded to do, said, “This is a destructive evil statement,” and then he mentioned the story of Ibn ʿUmar and that he had reckoned the divorce he had pronounced in his wife’s menstrual period [as an actual divorce].

Abū ʿUbayd said, “The people of knowledge from all the lands agree upon unanimously that it takes effect; those from the Hijaz, Tiham, Yemen, Sham, Iraq and Egypt.” Ibn al-Mundhir related it from all the people of knowledge whose statements are [worthy of being] memorised except for some innovators who are not held in high regard.

As for that which Ibn Ḥazm narrated from Ibn ʿUmar, that divorce does not take effect when pronounced during the menstrual period, which he supports by that which he narrated by way of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd as-Salam al-Khushani al-Andalusi who was told by Muḥammad ibn Bashshar who was told by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ath-Thaqafī from ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿUmar from Nāfiʿ that Ibn ʿUmar said concerning someone who divorces his wife while she is in her menstrual period, “It is not reckoned [as a divorce].” He has also something similar with a chain of transmission from Khilās. However, this tradition has

some words missing from its end, which are that he said, “The *ʿiddah* period is not reckoned from this menstrual period.” In that way, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah narrated it in his book from ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ath-Thaqafī, and similarly Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn from ʿAbd al-Wahhāb also and he said, “It is *gharīb*,[23] and no one but ʿAbd al-Wahhāb narrated it.” What Ibn ʿUmar meant was that the woman does not count the menstrual period in which she is divorced as one of the menstrual periods [in her *ʿiddah*], which is what Khilās and others meant.

That has also been narrated of a large group of the right-acting first generations such as Zayd ibn Thābit and Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab, but a group of Qur’ānic commentators misinterpreted it, as did Ibn Ḥazm, and they narrated from some of those whom we have named that divorce pronounced during the menstrual period does not take effect, and this is the cause of their misinterpretation, and Allah knows best.

This hadith [the subject of this chapter] was narrated by al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad when he was asked about a man who had three houses and who had bequeathed a third of [each of] his three houses, whether one should unite [the bequest] on his behalf

in a single house. He said, “One should unite all of it in one house. ʿĀ’ishah told me that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Whoever does an act on which our affair is not [based] then it is rejected.’” Muslim narrated it. What he meant was that changing the bequest of the person who bequeathed into something more beloved to Allah and something more beneficial is permissible. This is also said to be the view of ʿAṭā’ and Ibn Jurayj. Often some of those who take this position seek proof from His words, exalted is He:

فَمَنْ خَافَ مِن مُّوصٍ جَنَفاً أَوْ إِثْماً فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلاَ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ

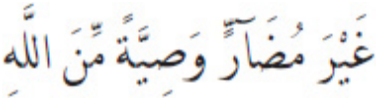
“But if someone fears bias or wrongdoing on the part of the person making the will, and puts things right between the people involved, in that case he has not committed any crime,”[24] and perhaps they also derive it from the the grouping of the freed slaves because it is authencally report that a man, “freed six slaves of his on his death, and the Prophet ﷺ called them and grouped them in three groups [of two], and then freed two [slaves] and re-enslaved four.” Muslim narrated it. The people who have discernment in hadith base themselves on this hadith, since to completely free a slave wherever possible is better

than to free a part of him [and thus to free two of the six entirely is preferrable to freeing some of each one of the six]. For this reason [the slave's] working [to free himself by purchasing his freedom] is laid down when a part-owner of a slave frees his portion of the slave [so that the slave does not languish as partly free and partly a slave]. He ﷺ said about someone who freed a part of his slave, "He is completely free; Allah has no partner,"[25] [there being no other part-owner of the slave].

Most of the people of knowledge disagree with this statement of al-Qāsim, holding to the position that the bequest is not to be combined and that his wording is followed except in the particular case of freeing a slave, because the meaning in the case of freeing a slave does not exist in respect to other properties, so that one has to act, with respect to them, as required by the bequest of the person making the will.

A party of people of *fiqh* take the position concerning freeing of slaves that each slave should have a third of him freed and they should all work to free the remaining portion, but following the judgement of the Prophet ﷺ is more correct and more fitting. Al-Qāsim considered the possibility that the

subject of the bequest sharing the heirs' houses along with them might be bothersome to them, and so he protected them from this harm and combined the bequest in one dwelling, because Allah has stipulated that bequests mustn't cause harm, in His words:



"...making sure that no one's rights are prejudiced. This is an instruction from Allah." (Sūrat an-Nisa: 12). Whoever causes harm by his bequest then his act is rejected because he contravenes what Allah, exalted is He, specifies for bequests.

A party of the people of *fiqh* take the position that if someone bequeaths one third of all his houses and then two thirds of them are destroyed leaving only one third, that all of it should be given to the subject of the bequest. This is the position of a party of Abū Ḥanīfah's associates, and is said to be the position of Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad [ibn al-Ḥasan ash-Shaybānī]. Qadi Abū Yaʿlā of our own people [the Ḥanbalīs] agreed with them in his disagreement [with the Ḥanbalī position]. They based that on the fact that the houses which are shared must compulsorily be

divided between those who share them, as is the position of Mālik and the apparent position of Ibn Abī Mūsā of our own people. What is well known among our people is that numerous dwellings are not to be divided up compulsorily, and that is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah and ash-Shāfiʿī, may Allah show mercy to them. Some of the Malikis interpret the above mentioned *fatwā* of al-Qāsim in this hadith that one of the two parties – the heirs and the subject of the bequest – asked for the houses to be divided up and that they were close together, so that they could be added together in the process of division, so that its division according to their request ought to be complied with, but this interpretation is remote and contradicts the apparent meaning, and Allah knows best.

1 Hadith 28 of this collection

2 An-Nasā'ī

3 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 21

4 The Kaʿbah

5 Referring to the *āyah* in Sūrat al-Anfāl (8:35) in which Allah, exalted is He, refers to the prayer of the polytheists of Makkah at the Kaʿbah as clapping and whistling. According to Ibn ʿAbbās

they used to circumambulate the Kaʿbah naked, whistling and clapping and used to consider this worship. Ed.

6 Al-Bukhārī (6704)

7 Al-Bukhārī (2695), Muslim (1697)

8 For example, the deal is being conducted when both or one of the parties haven't performed *ṣalāh* and there is not enough time to complete the deal and perform the *ṣalāh* after it. At such a time it is impermissible to continue with the transaction at that time; *ṣalāh* must be performed first. Ed.

9 With the exception of the Ḥanafī school which declares the marriage valid in the state of *iḥrām*. The jurists of all three other schools are unanimous that marriage is not valid if either party is in the state of *iḥrām* for Ḥajj or *ʿUmrah*. Ed.

10 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (1074) and Abū Dāwūd (2131)

11 Muslim narrated it.

12 Mālik in *Muwaṭṭa'*, and al-Bukhārī with a different wording.

13 Aḥmad (1:273), Abū Dāwūd (2096) and Ibn Mājah (1875).

14 Al-Bukhārī (3642) and others. The words of the hadith are different but to the same effect. Ed. Interestingly the value of the single sheep was a dīnār whose present value is around £40 (2006) for which a sheep can be bought today.

15 Muslim (1668), Abū Dāwūd (3958) and others.

16 Narrated by Muslim (1519) to the same effect but in different words.

17 This is done so that the towns-person can sell the goods at a higher price than that the county person would sell them at. So the city people are deceived as a result. Ed.

18 Abū Dāwūd (2696)

19 Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

20 Abū Dāwūd (2185)

21 *Sunan* of ad-Dāraquṭnī, *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd ar-Razzāq and *Sunan* of al-Bayhaqī

22 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 1

23 *Gharīb* “unusual” having a single narrator at some stage of the chain of transmission. Trans.

24 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 182

25 Abū Dāwūd (3933)

الحديث السادس

عَنِ النُّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُما قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿إِنَّ الْحَلَالَ بَيِّنٌ، وَإِنَّ الْحَرَامَ بَيِّنٌ، وَبَيْنَهُمَا أُمُورٌ مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ، لا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، فَمَنِ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ؛ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعِرْضِهِ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ؛ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ؛ كَالرَّاعِي يَرْعَى حَوْلَ الْحِمَى يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَرْتَعَ فِيهِ، أَلَا! وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَلِكٍ حِمًى، أَلَا! وَإِنَّ حِمَى اللهِ مَحَارِمُهُ، أَلَا! وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً، إِذَا صَلَحَتْ؛ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ؛ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، أَلَا! وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Ḥalāl, Ḥarām and Ambivalent Matters

Abū ʿAbdullāh an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ﷺ said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear and in between them there are ambivalent matters which many people do not know. Whoever guards himself against ambivalent matters has gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear in his *dīn* and his honour. Whoever falls into ambivalent matters will

fall into the ḥarām, like the shepherd who shepherds [his flock] around forbidden pasturage, he is certain to pasture [his flock] in it. Surely, every king has his forbidden pasturage. Surely, Allah's forbidden pasturage is the things He has forbidden. Surely, in the body there is a lump of flesh which when it is sound the whole body is sound and when it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart.'" Al-Bukhārī (52) and Muslim (1599) narrated it.

This hadith is authentic and its authenticity is agreed upon [by Muslim and al-Bukhārī] as transmitted by ash-Shaʿbī from an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr. In the wordings [of different versions] there are sometimes some additions and omissions, but the meaning is the same or close.

It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, ʿAmmār ibn Yasir, Jābir, Ibn Masʿūd, and Ibn ʿAbbās, but the hadith of an-Nuʿmān is the most sound of all the hadith in this section.

His words ﷺ "The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear and in between them are ambivalent matters which many people do not know," means that what is entirely permissible is totally clear without any ambiguity, and similarly what is entirely forbidden,

but however between the two there are matters which are unclear for many people as to whether they are *ḥalāl* or ḥarām, but as for those who are firmly established in knowledge they are not unclear for them and they know which of the two categories they are in.

As for what is entirely permissible, it is for example eating wholesome food of crops, fruits and [the meat of] livestock,[1] drinking wholesome drinks and dressing in that which is necessary such as cotton, linen, wool or hair-fibres, and marriage and taking slave-women, etc., when it has been earned by sound contractual means such as purchase, inheritance, gift or in the spoils of *jihād*.

That which is entirely forbidden is, for example, eating the meat of animals which have died by some other means than by *ḥalāl* slaughter, pork, drinking wine, marriage to those to whom marriage is forbidden, men wearing silk clothing, and, for example, earning by *ḥarām* means such as through usury, gambling, and [consuming] the price of something which is not *ḥalāl* to sell [such as selling wine and then buying *ḥalāl* food to eat with the

money], taking property forcefully by stealing it, expropriating it, or by deception, etc.

As for those things which are ambiguous, they are, for example, eating those things about which there is disagreement as to whether they are *ḥalāl* or ḥarām, either from corporeal things such as horses, mules and donkeys, lizards, drinking those things about which there is disagreement as to whether they are forbidden such as the *nabīdh*[2] drinks of which large amounts make one intoxicated, dressing in those things about whose permissibility there is disagreement such as the skins of wild animals, and the like; or from earnings about which there is disagreement such as *al-ʿīnah* and *at-tawarruq*,[3] and it was with such meanings that Aḥmad, Isḥāq and other imams explained the term 'ambiguities'.

The upshot is that Allah, exalted is He, sent down the Book upon His Prophet and explained what the ummah needs to know about that which is permitted and that which is forbidden within it, as He says, exalted is He:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

“We have sent down the Book to you making all things clear.”[4] Mujāhid and others said [explaining the *āyah*], “...everything they are commanded and forbidden.” He, exalted is He, says at the end of Sūrat an-Nisā’ [*āyah* 176], which explains a great many of the judgements on properties and sexual relations:

يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا۟ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“Allah makes things clear to you so you will not go astray. Allah has knowledge of all things.” And He says, exalted is He:

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا ٱضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ

“What is the matter with you that you do not eat that over which the name of Allah has been mentioned, when He has made clear to you what He has made *ḥarām* for you except when you are forced to eat it?”[5] And He says, exalted is He:

وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًۢا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَىٰهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُم مَّا يَتَّقُونَ

“Allah would never misguide a people after guiding them until He had made clear to them what they should avoid.”[6] He entrusted the explanation of that of the revelation which is difficult to the Messenger, as He says, exalted is He:

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

“And We have sent down the Reminder to you so that you can make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them.”[7] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not taken in death until the *dīn* was completed for him and his ummah, and so there was revealed to him on ʿArafah shortly before his death:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الإِسْلاَمَ دِيناً

“Today I have perfected your *dīn* for you and completed My blessing upon you and I am pleased with Islam as a *dīn* for you.”[8]

He said ﷺ, “I have left you on pure white whose night is like its day; no-one deviates from it but one who is to perish.”[9]

Abū Dharr ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died and there was no bird moving its wings in the sky but that he had taught us some knowledge about it.”[10]

When people doubted his death ﷺ his paternal uncle al-ʿAbbās ﷺ said, “By Allah! The Messenger of Allah did not die until he had left the way as a clear open road, and he permitted what is permitted and forbade what is forbidden, he married and divorced, made war and concluded treaties. No shepherd of sheep and goats who took them over the mountain tops beating down the leafy branches of tall thorny trees for them and plastering their watering trough with clay with his own hand was more exhausted and wearied by hard work than was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ among you.”[11]

In conclusion, Allah and His Messenger did not leave anything permitted or forbidden without clearly explaining it, but some of it is more obvious and evident than others. No doubt remains about that whose clarity is plainly apparent and well known, and which is known necessarily to be a part of the *dīn*, and no-one in any land in which Islam is dominant has any excuse to be ignorant of it. The things which are not so plainly clear, some of them are well known to those

who know the *Sharīʿah* in particular, and the people of knowledge are unanimous as to its permissibility or prohibition, but yet they might be obscure to some of those who are not of them [the people of knowledge]. There are other things which are even not so well known to those who know the *Sharīʿah*, and they disagree as to whether they are permissible or not. That is for various reasons:

It may be that the text relating to it is not well known and that only a few people transmitted it, so that not all people of knowledge came to know of it.

It may be that two texts are transmitted concerning it, one of which shows that it is permissible and the other that it is prohibited, and that one text reaches one party and not the other and so [each party] holds on firmly to that which has reached them. It may also be that both texts together reach people whom the history of the texts has not reached, and so they hesitate [between the judgement that it is permissible or that it is prohibited] because of their lack of knowledge of which of them abrogates and which is abrogated.

It may be that there is no clear text, and the judgement is derived from general rules, or from an

understanding or an analogical deduction, and about those things the understandings of people of knowledge differ greatly.

There are some things respecting which there is a command or a prohibition, but people of knowledge differ as to whether the command implies that it is obligatory or a recommendation, or as to whether the prohibition implies that it is forbidden or a matter which those who are scrupulous should avoid. There are many more reasons for disagreement than we have mentioned.

Along with all of that, there has to be a man of knowledge in the ummah whose position coincides with the truth, so that he is the one who has knowledge of this judgement when others find the matter ambiguous and thus are not knowledgeable about it. That is because this ummah will not agree on error, and its false people will not overcome its true people so that the truth will never be totally abandoned and not acted upon in all the lands and in all epochs. For this reason the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about ambiguities, “Many people do not know them,” showing that there are people who do know them, but that they are ambiguous to those who do

not know them although they are not in themselves ambiguous, and this is the reason for the ambiguity of some matters to many people of knowledge.

Ambiguity can occur in respect to what is permitted and what is forbidden among the people of knowledge and others in another way, which is that the cause of the permissibility of some things is known, which is certain ownership. The cause of some things being forbidden is known, which is that the ownership of someone else is firmly established. The permissibility of the first does not cease unless one knows for sure that ownership has passed from one, O Allah! except in the case of sexual relations according to those who consider divorce to take effect when there is some doubt about it, such as Mālik, or its occurrence is more probable in one's opinion, such as is the view of Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh. Second, its prohibition is only removed by sure knowledge of the transfer of ownership in it.

As for that of which someone does not know its ownership's origin, such as something which someone finds in his own house of which he does not know if it is his or someone else's, then this is ambiguous, but it is not forbidden for him to consume it, since it is

evident that whatever is in his house is his property, since it is actually in his possession, but it would be more scrupulous to avoid it. He said ﷺ "Sometimes I go to my family and find a date which has fallen on my mattress and lift it to eat it, and then I fear that it might be from the *zakāh* and so cast it away."[12] They narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books.[13]

If something is [also] there [at one's home with one's own possessions] that is from the forbidden category, and one is in doubt whether it is or not from it [the forbidden category], then the ambiguity is even stronger. In the hadith of ʿAmr ibn Shu'ayb from his father from his grandfather ﷺ there is that, "The Prophet ﷺ suffered from insomnia one night. One of his wives said to him, 'Messenger of Allah, you were sleepless last night,' and he said, 'I found a date underneath me and ate it, but we had some dates from the *zakāh* with us and I was afraid that it might have been one of them.'"[14]

There are also those things which are typically *ḥalāl* such as the purity of water, clothing and land [i.e. these are assumed to be pure and permitted for use] if there is no certainty of the departure of its original condition, and so it is permitted to use it.

Those things which are initially forbidden such as sexual relations and the meat of animals, only become permissible by certainty of their permissibility by *ḥalāl* slaughter [of the meat] and contract [marriage, or ownership in the case of slave women]. If one has doubts about anything of that because of the appearance of some other cause, then one must return to the initial situation and base oneself on it, thus in that whose initial situation is that it is forbidden one considers it forbidden. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ forbade the eating of game in which the hunter finds traces of someone else's arrow, or the marks of someone else's dog [so that it is possible the animal died because of an old wound rather than because of the hunter's arrow or dog], or finds that it has fallen into water [and thus possibly drowned],[15] because it is not known whether it died from the cause which makes it permissible [the hunters arrow or dog which he releases pronouncing Allah's name] or from some other cause.

In those matters whose initial situation is that they are permitted, one returns to the fact that they are permissible, so that one does not consider water, clothing or land impure just because of a suspicion of

impurity. It is similar in the case of the body when one has purified it but has a subsequent doubt that the state of purity has been disrupted by one of those matters that do so [such as breaking wind, etc.] according to the majority of the people of knowledge and as opposed to Mālik ﷺ if one has not already entered into the prayer.[16] It is also a sound tradition from the Prophet ﷺ "That a man complained to him that he imagined that he found something [which disrupted his state of purity] during the prayer, and he said, 'Do not break off [from the prayer] unless you hear a sound or experience a smell [from the breaking of wind]."[17] In some of the narrations it refers to being "in the mosque" rather than in the prayer.

This is general in the case of prayer and other things. If such a strong cause [of suspicion] is found, that the impurity of something that is originally pure becomes most probable in one's opinion for example, clothing that a *kāfir* had worn who had not taken any care to keep it clean, then this is a reason for doubt. Some of the people of knowledge make concessions for it based on extenuating circumstances, taking their position from the original state [of purity]. Some of them disapprove of it out of scrupulousness. Some of

them consider it to be forbidden if there is a strong suspicion of impurity, for example, if the *kāfir* is one of those whose slaughtered meat is not permitted [to Muslims], or [the clothing], such as trousers and shirt, is in immediate contact with his private parts. These issues and others like them are based on the principle of the original situation and the ostensible circumstance, because the original situation is [that clothing is considered in a state of] purity, but the ostensible circumstance is [that the clothing has an extremely strong probability of] impurity. The proofs in this matter are contradictory.

Those who take the position that it is pure, seek to prove it by the fact that Allah, exalted is He, permits the food of the People of the Book and they prepare that with their own hands in their cooking vessels, and that the Prophet ﷺ accepted the invitation of a Jew, and he and his companions used to wear and use that which came to them of those items of clothing which the kafirun had woven with their own hands, or vessels [which they had handmade]. During battles they would divide up those bags and items of clothing which fell to their lot and make use of them. It is established by an authentic hadith that they used

water from the provision container belonging to an idolatrous woman.[18]

Those who take the position that such things are unclean seek to derive a proof from the fact that it is established by an authentic tradition from the Prophet ﷺ that he was asked about a vessel of the People of the Book who eat pork and drink wine and he said, “If you cannot find something else, then wash it with water and eat from it.”[19]

Imam Aḥmad explained ambiguity as a position in between that which is permissible and that which is forbidden, i.e. those things which are permitted outright and forbidden outright. He said, “Whoever guards himself against ambivalent matters has gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear in his *dīn* and his honour.” Sometimes he explained it [ambiguity] as the mixing of things which are permissible with those which are forbidden.

Transacting with someone in whose wealth there is both permitted and forbidden [property] mixed together is another branch of this. If most of his property is forbidden, then Aḥmad said, “One ought to avoid it unless it is something insignificant or

something unknown." Our people differ in two ways as to whether it is disapproved or forbidden:

If most of his property is *ḥalāl* it is permitted to transact with him and to eat from his wealth. Al-Ḥārith narrated of ʿAlī ﷺ that he said concerning the stipend granted by the ruler, "There is no harm in it. That which he gives you of the *ḥalāl* is more than that which he gives you of the *ḥarām*." The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, used to transact with those who associate partners with Allah and with the People of the Book, knowing full well that they do not avoid everything which is forbidden. If the matter is not clear then it is an ambiguity and scrupulousness is to give it up. Sufyān said, "That doesn't please me, and I prefer that one give it up."

Az-Zuhrī and Makḥūl both said, "It is no harm to eat from it as long as it is not known specifically that it is forbidden." If one doesn't specifically know that in the other's wealth there is something forbidden, but that one does know of some ambiguity, then there is no harm in eating from it. Aḥmad stated that in the transmission from him of Ḥanbal.

Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh took the position narrated of Ibn Masʿūd, Salmān and others, that it is permitted as

a concession, and that which is narrated of alḤasan and Ibn Sīrīn on the permissibility of taking from wealth that is paid for from usury and gambling, and he narrated it as the position of Ibn Manṣūr.

Imam Aḥmad said about wealth whose *ḥalāl* element is ambiguously indistinguishable from its *ḥarām*, "If there is a great deal of wealth he must take out of it the amount of that which is *ḥarām* and transact with the remainder, but if the wealth is little he should avoid all of it." That is because if some of the little quantity of wealth is consumed it is unlikely to be safe from the *ḥarām*, as opposed to the case of a lot of wealth. Of our people there are those who regard this judgement as being in the realm of scrupulousness rather than being a prohibition and permit transacting with either the large or small quantity after having removed an amount equivalent to that which is *ḥarām* from it, and that is also the position of the Ḥanafīs and others, and some scrupulous people based themselves on that, such as Bishr al-Ḥāfī.

Some people of the right-acting first generations granted concessions for one to eat from the property of someone some of whose property is known to be

ḥarām as long as it is known that what one consumes is not *ḥarām*, as we saw previously of Makḥūl and az-Zuhrī, and something similar is narrated of al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ. Many traditions to that effect are narrated of the right-acting first generations. There is an authentic narration from Ibn Masʿūd that he was asked about someone whose neighbour openly consumed usury and felt no harm in taking unwholesome property and who invited him to eat with him. He said, "Accept his invitation because the gratification is yours and the wrong action is his." In another narration [the questioner] said, "I don't know if he has anything that is not corrupt or *ḥarām*." So he said, "Accept his invitation." Imam Aḥmad authenticated this tradition from Ibn Masʿūd, but he contradicts it with the statement that is narrated of him that he said, "Wrong action is that which makes hearts uneasy."[20]

Something similar to the first statement of Ibn Masʿūd above has been narrated of Salmān, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Muwarriq al-ʿIjlī, Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī, Ibn Sīrīn and others, and the traditions relating to that are in the *Kitāb al-adab* by Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh, and some are in the book *al-Jāmiʿ* by al-

Khallāl and in the *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd ar-Razzaq and Ibn Abī Shaybah and others.

When it is known that the source of the thing is *ḥarām* and that it was acquired in some forbidden manner, then it is forbidden to consume it. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and others narrate that there is unanimity on that. It is narrated that Ibn Sīrīn said about a man who gets paid from usury, "There is no harm in it," and about a man who gets paid from gambling, "There is no harm in it." Al-Khallāl narrated it with a sound chain of transmission. However the contrary is narrated of al-Ḥasan and that he said, "These earnings are corrupt so only take from it that which resembles the [actions of someone] in pressing need [for whom the *ḥarām* becomes permissible as long as he fears he might die or suffer harm if he did not take it]." That which is narrated of Abū Bakr as-Siddiq ﷺ contradicts that narrated of Ibn Masʿūd and Salmān, because he ate some food and then upon being told that it was *ḥarām* [i.e. from *ḥarām* earnings], he made himself vomit."

Sometimes, ambiguity arises in judgement because of the fact that it is uncertain which principles the derivative judgement comes under. For example, a

man's declaring his wife to be *ḥarām* to him. In this case it is uncertain as to whether this is a declaration of *ẓihār* divorce[21] which is only revoked by the greater expiation [of freeing a slave, or two consecutive months' fasting, or feeding sixty poor people], or a single declaration of divorce with the expiration of whose *ʿiddah* period the wife becomes permissible to him again with a new marriage contract [if she accepts his marriage proposal], or a triple divorce with which the wife cannot be permissible to him again without marrying another husband and having intercourse with him,[22] or even whether it is like a man's declaring something which Allah permits him of food and drink to be *ḥarām* for himself but which does not in reality make them *ḥarām*, and which requires a lesser expiation, or may not even require anything at all [in the way of expiation] depending on the difference of opinion in that. It is from here that many differences of opinion arose on this question in the time of the Companions and after them.

In any case, the ambiguous matters which are not clear to many people as to whether they are *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, as the Prophet ﷺ told, are clear to some people as to whether they are *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām* because of the

extra knowledge that they have about that. The words of the Prophet ﷺ show that there are those who know these ambiguities, but that many do not. There are two types of people who do not know them:

First, there are those who hesitate about them because they appear ambiguous to them.

Second, there are those who believe them to be other than they are.

The wording shows that people other than these ones know them, meaning that they know whether they are in essence *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*. This is one of the most obvious proofs that only one person [when there are many different views] is correct with Allah concerning the matters which are ambiguous and on which there is disagreement as to whether they are *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*. Anyone other than him is not knowledgeable about them, meaning that in essence they do not hit upon the judgement of Allah on these matters, even if they believe some principle about them which they derive from an ambiguity which they believe is a proof, and even though they will be rewarded for exerting their intellects and forgiven for their mistake because they did not do it deliberately.

In his words ﷺ, "Whoever guards himself against ambivalent matters has gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear in his *dīn* and his honour. Whoever falls into ambivalent matters will fall into the *ḥarām*," he categorised people in two groups with respect to ambiguous matters, but this is only with respect to those for whom they are ambivalent, i.e. the one who doesn't have knowledge of them. As for whoever knows about them and follows that which his knowledge shows him about them, this is a third group whom he did not mention because of obviousness of the judgement about them, since this group are the best of the three because they know the judgement of Allah about these ambiguous matters and follow their knowledge on that. As for those who do not know the judgement of Allah on them they are in two groups:

First, those who guard against these ambiguities because of their dubious nature, and these have gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear in their *dīn* and their honour.

The meaning of 'have gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear' is that they seek to be free in their *dīn* and their honour from any shortcoming and

dishonour. Honour (*ʿirḍ*) is the object of praise or blame in the human being. If something beautiful is mentioned about one that is praise, and if something ugly then that is blame. Sometimes that can be in the same person, sometimes in his forebears, or his family. Whoever guards himself against ambiguous matters and avoids them has made his honour impregnable against the blame and dishonour which come to someone who does not avoid them. This shows that whoever involves himself in ambiguous matters exposes himself to blame and attack, as one of the right-acting first generations said, "Whoever exposes himself to suspicion should not blame whoever has a bad opinion of him."

In a narration of at-Tirmidhī of this hadith there is, "So whoever gives it [the doubtful matter] up, in order to be utterly clear in his *dīn* and his honour, is safe,"[23] meaning that whoever gives it up with this intention, i.e. to be free from any shortcoming in his *dīn* and his honour, and not for any other incorrect purpose such as showing-off, etc. There is a proof in it that seeking to be free in one's honour is as praiseworthy as seeking to be clear in one's *dīn*, and so it is narrated

that, “Everything with which a man protects his honour is an act of *ṣadaqah*.”

In a narration in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books of this hadith there is, “Whoever gives up what wrongdoing is unclear to him, will do more to give up what is clearly [wrong],” meaning that someone who gives up wrong action when it is ambiguous to him and he fails to realise its true nature [whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*], is more likely to give it up when it becomes clear to him that it is wrong action. This is in the case where his giving it up is in order to take every precaution against wrong action. As for those who intend to cultivate the impression [of being scrupulous] in front of people, they only give up things because they will be praised by people for giving them up.

The second group are those who become involved in ambiguities even though they are ambiguous to them. As for those who embark on something which people think is ambiguous because they themselves know that it is actually permissible, then there is nothing against them with Allah for that. However, if one fears the villification of people in that case, giving it up is a way of going to the limit in guarding one’s honour, which is good. This is as the Prophet ﷺ said

to someone who saw him standing with Ṣafiyyah, “She is Ṣafiyyah bint Ḥuyay.”[24] Anas went out to the Jumuʿah but he saw that people had prayed and were coming away, so he was ashamed and went aside into a place where people could not see him, and said, “Whoever is not shy before people will not be shy before Allah.” Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it[25] as a *marfūʿ* hadith but that is not sound.

If someone approaches that [doubtful action] because he believes that it is permissible, either because of an allowable *ijtihād*[26] or an allowable *taqlīd*[27], and he is mistaken in his belief, then the judgement on him is the same as the previous judgement. However, if his exertion of his intellect to reach a new judgement is weak or his following someone on whom he thinks it acceptable to model himself is not allowable, but he was only convinced purely by the following of his whim, then the judgement on him is the same as the judgement on someone who embarks on it along with his being in doubt about it. The Prophet ﷺ told us about whoever does undertake something along with his being in doubt about whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, that he will

fall into that which is *ḥarām*. This is explained in two ways:

First, that his embarking on the matter which is ambiguous along with his conviction that it is ambiguous is a means which will lead him, gradually and through self-indulgence, to embark upon that which is forbidden and which he is convinced is *ḥarām*. In a version of this hadith outside of the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is, "and whoever dares to do that which he suspects is a wrong action, is more likely to fall into that which is clearly [wrong action]...".[28] In another narration there is, "whoever meddles with doubt is more likely to dare [to go further]," i.e. he will soon advance to something which is entirely *ḥarām*. "Daring" (*jusūr*) is to have the audacity which fears nothing and is not fearfully vigilant for anyone. Some narrate the word as "*yajshuru*" with the letter *shīn* [instead of sīn], i.e. meaning to pasture, whose noun of action, jashr, is "pasturage", as in pasturing animals. In the *Marāsīl*[29] of Abū'l-Mutawakkil an-Nājī there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever pastures on the edges of the *ḥarām* is more likely to become mixed up with it. Whoever thinks little of minor wrong

actions is more likely to become mixed up with major wrong actions."

Second, that whoever advances to do that which is doubtful to him not knowing whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, is not safe from it actually being *ḥarām*, and so he may become involved in the *ḥarām* without knowing that it is so. It has been narrated in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear and between the two of them there are ambiguities. Whoever guards against them, then it will be purer for his *dīn* and his honour. Whoever falls into ambiguities is more likely to fall into the *ḥarām*, just as the one who grazes [his flocks] around protected pasturage is likely to venture into the protected pasturage without realising." Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated it.[30]

The people of knowledge differ as to whether one should obey one's parents with respect to doubtful matters or not. It has been narrated from Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith that he said, "There is no obedience [owing] to them for doubtful matters." Muḥammad ibn Muqātil al-ʿIbādānī said, "One should obey them." Aḥmad hesitated over this matter and he said, "One should

treat them gently," and he refused to give an answer about it.

Aḥmad said, "A man should not sell something doubtful, nor should he buy clothing for adornment from that which is doubtful," but he hesitated over the limit with respect to that which is eaten or worn. He said about a date which a bird drops that one should not eat it, take it nor meddle with it.

Ath-Thawrī said about someone who found *fulūs*[31] and dirhams in his house, "I prefer that he refrain from [using] them," meaning when he does not know where they come from. Some people of the right-acting first generations would not eat anything unless they knew from where it came, and they would ask about it until they discovered its source. There is a hadith which has been attributed [to the Prophet ﷺ] on that, but there is a weakness in the chain of transmission.

His words ﷺ, "...like the shepherd who shepherds [his flock] around forbidden pasturage, he is almost certain to pasture [his flock] in it. Certainly, every king has his forbidden pasturage. Certainly, Allah's forbidden pasturage is the thingsHehas forbidden." ThisisasimilitudewhichtheProphet ﷺ struckforthe one

who becomes involved in ambiguities, that he is almost certain to become involved in things which are plainly forbidden. In some narrations there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I will strike a similitude for that...” and then he mentioned the above. The Prophet ﷺ made the similitude of things that are forbidden as the protected pasturage which kings protect and which they prevent others from approaching. The Prophet ﷺ made twelve miles around his Madīnah a protected and forbidden pasturage in which trees are not allowed to be cut, nor creatures hunted.[32] The protected pasturages of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān were places in which fresh herbage grew for the camels of the *zakāh*.[33]

Allah ﷻ protects these things which are forbidden and prevents His slaves from drawing near them, and He calls them “His limits”. He says:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

“These are Allah’s limits, so do not go near them. In this way does Allah make His Signs clear to people so that hopefully they will have *taqwā*.”[34] In this there is a clarification that He has drawn the limits of what He permits them and what He forbids for them, so that

they must not approach that which is forbidden nor go beyond that which is *ḥalāl*. Similarly, He says in another *āyah*:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"These are Allah's limits so do not overstep them. Those who overstep Allah's limits are wrongdoers."[35] He regards whoever pastures around the protected pasturage or near to it, as predisposed to go into the pasturage and graze in it. Similarly, whoever oversteps that which is permitted and falls into ambiguities, comes as close as it is possible to that which is forbidden, and so how likely he is to become mixed up with the things which are clearly forbidden and fall into them. This is an indication that one ought to put oneself as far away as possible from things which are forbidden, and that one ought to put a barrier between oneself and them.

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated from a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Yazīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The slave [of Allah] will not attain being one of the people of *taqwā* until he gives up that in which there is no harm as a precaution against that in which there is harm."[36]

Abū'd-Dardā' ﷺ said, "The perfection of *taqwā* is that the slave should have so much *taqwā* of Allah that he fears Him over the weight of a tiny ant, and so much that he gives up that which he thinks is permissible out of fear that it might be forbidden, in order to put a veil between him and that which is forbidden."

Al-Ḥasan said, "*Taqwā* continues in the people of *taqwā* so long as they give up much of that which is permissible out of fear of that which is forbidden."

Ath-Thawrī said, "They were only called the people of *taqwā* because they had *taqwā* for that for which there is no [need for] *taqwā*." It has been narrated that Ibn ʿUmar said, "I prefer to put between me and that which is forbidden a veil of that which is permitted and not pierce it."

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, "That which is permitted is not safe for a man until he puts between him and that which is forbidden a barrier of that which is permitted."

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah said, "A slave [of Allah] will not strike on the reality of *īmān* until he puts a barrier of that which is *ḥalāl* between himself and that which

is forbidden, and until he gives up wrong action and whatever resembles it."

Those who take the position of *sadd adh-dharā'iʿ* [blocking means] which lead to forbidden things and forbidding the means which lead to them, do so by means of this hadith. Another proof of that also from the principles of the *Sharīʿah* is forbidding a little of that of which a lot intoxicates, the prohibition of being alone with a woman who is a non-relative and to whom one is not married, and the prohibition of prayer after the morning and afternoon prayers in order to prevent prayer at the time of sunrise and sunset, the prevention of the fasting person from embracing if that will cause his sexual appetite to stir, and the prohibition by many people of knowledge of a man's embracing a woman in her menstrual period between her navel and her knees unless there is something intervening [between him and her body], just as the Prophet ﷺ told his wife when she was in her menstrual period to wear an *izār*[37] and he would embrace her above the *izār*.[38]

Another example which is like the example the Prophet struck ﷺ "Whoever neglects his beast grazing near to somebody else's crops is responsible for the

crops that it ruins, even if that occurs during the day," and this is correct, because he is neglectful by setting it free in that condition. Similarly [another example], the difference of opinion in the case where someone unleashes his hunting dog near to the *ḥarām* [of Makkah or Madīnah], and it then enters the *ḥarām* and hunts within it. There are two different narrations from Aḥmad about his responsibility, and it has been said that he must be responsible for it in every case.

In his words ﷺ, “Surely, in the body there is a lump of flesh which when it is sound the whole body is sound and when it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart,” there is an indication that the rightness of the slave’s limbs’ movements, his avoidance of the things which are forbidden and his guarding against the things which are ambiguous are according to the measure of the soundness of his heart. If his heart is sound and there is nothing in it but love of Allah and love of what Allah loves, and fear of Allah and fear of falling into that which He dislikes, then all of the actions of the limbs will be right, and there will arise from that his avoidance of all forbidden things, and his guarding himself against ambiguities in case he should fall into things which are forbidden. If the heart is corrupt and it is overcome by following whims and his seeking what he loves even if Allah dislikes it, then all of the limbs’ movements will be corrupt, and will give rise to every act of disobedience and [engagement in every] ambiguous matter according to the extent of his following the heart’s whim.

For this reason it is said that the heart is the king of the limbs and organs and the other limbs and

organs are its troops. Along with this, they are troops which are obedient to it and motivated by obedience to it and to executing its commands, not opposing it in any of that. If the king is right, then these troops will be right-acting, but if he is corrupt, his troops will be corrupt. Nothing is of any use to Allah but a sound heart, as He says, exalted is He:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

"The Day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any use – except to those who come to Allah with sound and flawless hearts."[39]

The Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

اَللَّهُمَّ أَسْأَلُكَ قَلْباً سَلِيماً

"O Allah, I ask You for a sound heart."[40] The sound heart is one which is safe from all defects and disapproved things, and it is the heart in which there is nothing but love of Allah and of that which Allah loves, and fear of Him and of that which puts one far from Him.

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ there is from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The *īmān* of a slave will not be straight until his heart is straight.”[41] What is meant by the straightness of his *īmān*, is the straightness of the limbs’ actions, because the limbs’ actions are only straight by the heart’s straightness. The meaning of the heart’s straightness is that it should be full of love of Allah, exalted is He, and love of obeying Him and hatred of disobeying Him.

Al-Ḥasan said to a man, “Tend your heart, for what Allah needs from the slaves is soundness of their hearts.” Meaning that what He wants and seeks from them is the soundness of their hearts, and there is no soundness in hearts until the gnosis of Allah, His might, His love, fear of Him, awe of Him, hope of Him, and reliance on Him are established in them and they are full of that. This is the reality of *tawḥīd*, and it is the meaning of the saying, “There is no god but Allah.” There is no soundness in hearts until the god whom they worship, recognise, love and fear is Allah alone without any partner. If there had been a god other than Allah who was worshipped in the heavens and the earth, the heavens and the earth would have become ruined by that, as He says, exalted is He:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

"If there had been any gods besides Allah in heaven or earth, they would both be ruined."[42]

So by that it is known that there is no rightness and order in either the upper or lower world until the movements of their inhabitants are all for Allah. The movements of the body follow the movements of the heart and its will, so that if its movement and its will are for Allah alone then it will be sound, and the movements of the whole body will be sound and if the movement of the heart and its will are for other than Allah it will be ruined, and the movement of the body will be ruined according to the extent of the ruin of the heart's movement.

Al-Layth narrated from Mujāhid concerning His words:

أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

"...that you do not associate anything with Him,"[43] "He is saying, 'Do not love anyone other than Me.'"

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim there is from ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The act of associating partners with Allah is more hidden than the creeping of ants on a stone on a dark night. The least of it is that you love some act of tyranny or hate some act of justice; and is the *dīn* anything but love and hate? Allah, exalted is He, says:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

'Say, "If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you."'[44]"[45] This shows that the love of what Allah detests and the hatred of what He loves means that one is following one's whims, and doing that continuously and habitually is a part of the lesser association of partners with Allah, which is shown by His words, "Say, 'If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you.'" Allah makes following His Messenger the sign of the truthfulness of loving Him, which shows that love is incomplete without obedience and compliance.

Al-Ḥasan ﵀ said, "The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Messenger of Allah, we love our Lord greatly,' and so Allah loved to make a

sign for His love. So Allah revealed this *āyah*, ‘Say, “If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you.”’” From this al-Ḥasan said, “Know that you will never love Allah until you love obedience to Him.”

Dhū’n-Nūn al-Miṣrī was asked, “When do I love my Lord?” He said, “When what He hates is more bitter to you than the aloe.” Bishr ibn as-Sirrī said, “It is not one of the signs of love that you should love what your Beloved hates.” Abū Yaʿqūb an-Nahrajūrī said, “Everyone who claims to love Allah ﷻ and does not comply with Allah’s command, then his claim is false.” Ruwaym said, “Love is compliance in every state.” Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh said, “He who claims to love Allah and does not guard His limits is not truthful.” One of the right-acting first generations said, “I read in one of the ancient books, ‘Whoever loves Allah, nothing will have greater weight with him than His good pleasure. Whoever loves the world, nothing will have greater weight with him than his self’s whims.”

In the *Sunan* it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever gives for the sake of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah, and loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah, has perfected *īmān*.” The meaning of this is that if every movement of the heart

and limbs is for the sake of Allah, then the slave's *īmān* has by that become perfect inwardly and outwardly. It follows from the rightness of the movements of the heart that the movements of the limbs will be right. If the heart is right and there is nothing in it but the will of Allah and willing what He wills, then the limbs will only proceed with that which Allah wills, and will hasten to that in which lies His good pleasure and will withhold themselves from what He dislikes and from that which one fears that He may dislike even though one is not certain of it.

Al-Ḥasan ﵀ said, "I do not look with my sight, nor talk with my tongue, nor grasp with my hand, nor get up on my feet until I consider whether it is for the sake of an act of obedience or of disobedience. If it is obedience, I continue. If it is disobedience, then I delay." Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl al-Balkhī said, "I have not taken a step for forty years for the sake of any other than Allah ﷻ." Someone said to Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā'ī, "If only you would move from the shade into the sun." He said, "This is a step about which I do not know how it will be recorded."

When these people's hearts were right and the desire of any other than Allah did not remain in them,

then their limbs became right and they only moved for the sake of Allah ﷻ and for the sake of that in which His good pleasure lies, and Allah knows best.

1 *Anʿām* “livestock” comprise sheep and goats, camels and cattle. Ed.

2 A *nabīdh* drink is made by leaving a fruit in water for some time until the water takes on the flavour of the fruit. However, if left for too long the drink becomes intoxicating like wine. Ed.

3 *Al-ʿīnah* and *at-tawarruq* are complex sets of sales and purchases for periods of times that can be used to disguise the fact that someone is borrowing money at interest. Trans.

4 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 89

5 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 119

6 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 115

7 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 44

8 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 3

9 Part of a hadith narrated by Aḥmad (4:26) and Ibn Mājah (43)

10 Aḥmad (5:53)

11 Ibn Saʿd in *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt*

12 The Prophet ﷺ and his family and descendants are not permitted *zakāh*. Trans.

13 Al-Bukhārī (232), Muslim (1069)

14 Aḥmad (2:183)

15 Al-Bukhārī (175)

16 Meaning that Imam Mālik's opinion is slightly different in that he holds it necessary to make *wuḍū*' if one suspects his *wuḍū*' has broken unless one has already begun the *ṣalāh* in which case the suspicion should be ignored. The other Imams hold that one should ignore the suspicion in any case as long as one is certain of having been in a state of purity before the suspicion occurred. Ed.

17 Al-Bukhārī (137)

18 Al-Bukhārī (344)

19 Al-Bukhārī (5478)

20 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*

21 *Ẓihār* divorce is where the man says to his wife, "You are to me like my mother's back". Trans.

22 Then if this second marriage ends in divorce she may accept a new marriage proposal from her former husband.

23 At-Tirmidhī (125)

24 Al-Bukhārī (3281), Muslim (2175)

25 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

26 *Ijtihād*: exertion of the intellect to reach a judgement on a new situation. Trans.

27 *Taqlīd*: following of another person's judgement. Trans.

28 Abū Dāwūd (3329), an-Nasā'ī (8:327)

29 *Mursal* hadith transmitted by a Follower and lacking a Companion or Companions from their chains of transmission. Trans.

30 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

31 *Fulūs* are small coins ordinarily of copper or nickel, whose value does not exceed a half dirham and which are used for small everyday purchases for which silver or gold are too valuable. It is not to be confused with the modern Arabic usage of *fulūs* in the sense of “money”. Trans.

32 Al-Bukhārī (1873), Muslim (1372)

33 Al-Bukhārī (2370)

34 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 187

35 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 229

36 At-Tirmidhī (2451), Ibn Mājah (4215)

37 An *izār* is a large cloth wrapped around the lower half of the body. It is worn by males and females. Trans.

38 Al-Bukhārī (300), Muslim (293)

39 Sūrat ash-Shuʿarā’: 88-89

40 At-Tirmidhī (3407), an-Nasā’ī (3:54), Aḥmad (4:125)

41 Aḥmad (3:198)

42 Sūrat al-Anbiyā’: 22

43 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 151

44 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 31

45 Al-Ḥākim (2:291)

الحديث السابع

عَنْ تَمِيمٍ الدَّارِيِّ ﷺ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ﴾ ثلاثاً، قُلْنَا: لِمَنْ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: ﴿لِلَّهِ، وَلِكِتَابِهِ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلِأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Sincerity and Counsel

Abū Ruqayyah Tamīm ibn Aws ad-Dārī ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said three times, "The *dīn* is sincerity."[1] We said, "Towards whom?" He said, "Towards Allah, His Book, His Messenger, the leaders of the Muslims and the generality of them." Muslim narrated it (55).

Muslim narrated this hadith from the version of Suhayl ibn Abī Ṣāliḥ from ʿAṭā' ibn Yazīd al-Laythī from Tamīm ad-Dārī. It has also been narrated from Suhayl and others, from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ and at-Tirmidhī narrated it in this way. Some people of knowledge regard both paths of transmission as being sound, but some of them say that the sound one is the hadith of Tamīm ad-Dārī and that the other chain of transmission is illusory.

This hadith has also been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ through Ibn ʿUmar, Thawbān, Ibn ʿAbbās and others.

We mentioned at the beginning of the book that Abū Dāwūd considered this hadith one of the hadith around which *fiqh* revolves.

The Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuʿaym said, "This hadith is tremendously important." Muḥammad ibn Aslam aṭ-Ṭūsī mentioned that it is one quarter of the *dīn*.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī related the hadith of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yaman that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever is not concerned with the Muslims' affairs is not one of them. Whoever does not show sincerity, evening and morning, to Allah, His Messenger, His Book, his leader and to the Muslims in general is not one of them."[2]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ says, 'The most beloved of that with which My slave worships Me is sincerity towards Me."[3]

Many hadith are narrated concerning sincerity towards the Muslims in general, and in some there is mention of sincerity towards those who govern their affairs, and the sincerity those who govern affairs must show to their flocks.

As for the first, sincerity towards the Muslims in general, it is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh said, "I pledged allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ on the basis of establishing the prayer, producing the *zakāh* and sincerity towards every Muslim."[4]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* is owed six things by the *mu'min*," of which he mentioned, "when he asks for your sincere good counsel, then advise him." This hadith has been narrated in other ways from the Prophet ﷺ.[5]

In the *Musnad* there is from Ḥakīm ibn Abī Yazīd from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When any of you asks his brother to give him sincere advice, he should advise him."[6]

As for the latter, sincerity towards those who govern our affairs and their sincerity towards those in their charge, it is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah is pleased with three things for you. He is pleased for you that you should worship Him and not associate anything as a partner with Him, and that you should hold tight to the rope of Allah together and not

separate, and that you and whoever Allah gives charge over your affair should be sincere to each other."[7]

In the *Musnad* and elsewhere there is from Jubayr ibn Muṭʿim ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said during his *khuṭbah* at Khayf in Minā, "There are three things which if the *mu'min* holds to them his heart will never become full of rancour: making deeds purely for the sake of Allah, being sincere towards those who govern affairs, and clinging to the main body of the Muslims."[8] A large group narrated this *khuṭbah* from the Prophet ﷺ of whom there was Abū Saʿīd al-Khudri. It has also been narrated in a hadith from Abū Saʿīd in another wording which ad-Dāraquṭnī transmitted in al-Afrād with a good chain of transmission, and its wording is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are three things which if the *mu'min* holds to then his heart will never become full of rancour, malevolence and spite: sincerity towards Allah and His Messenger, towards His Book and towards the Muslims in general."[9]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Maʿqil ibn Yasār there the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any slave whom Allah entrusts with a flock and he doesn't encompass

them with sincere good counsel will not enter the Garden."[10]

Allah mentions in His Book that the Prophets were sincere towards their peoples, as He informed us of Nūḥ ﷺ and Ṣāliḥ ﷺ. He says:

لَّيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَاء وَلاَ عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلاَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لاَ يَجِدُونَ مَا يُنفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ إِذَا نَصَحُواْ لِلّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

"Nothing is held against the weak and sick nor against those who find nothing to spend, provided they are true[11] to Allah and His Messenger,"[12] meaning that nothing is held against those who stay away from *jihād* because of a valid excuse provided that they are sincere towards Allah and His Messenger in their staying away. The hypocrites deceitfully used to make a show of their excuses and stay away from *jihād* without being sincere towards Allah and His Messenger.

The Prophet ﷺ told that the *dīn* is sincerity, which indicates that sincerity is a term which comprises the characteristics of Islam, *īmān* and *iḥsān* which were mentioned in the hadith of Jibrīl ﷺ. All of that is known as '*dīn*', because sincerity towards Allah requires that one undertakes to discharge one's

obligations in the best manner and that is the station of *iḥsān* without which sincerity towards Allah is incomplete. That [station of *iḥsān*] is unfeasible without complete love both that which is obligatory and that which is desirable, and that necessarily requires exertion towards drawing closer to Him by voluntary acts of obedience in this respect and giving up those things which are forbidden and disapproved of in this respect also.

Among the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan there is that he said, "What do you think, if any of you had two slaves one of whom obeyed him when he told him to do something and would return a trust if entrusted with it and would be true to him when he was away, but the other would disobey him if he told him to do something, betray him if entrusted with something, and deceive him if he was away? Are they equal?" They said, "No." He said, "You are like that with Allah ﷻ." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it. Imam Aḥmad narrated the same meaning from a hadith of Abū'l-Aḥwaṣ from his father from the Prophet ﷺ.[13]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, "Love is better than fear. Do you not see that if you have two slaves one of whom loves you and the other of whom fears you, that

the one who loves you will be true to you whether you are present or absent because of his love of you. The one who fears you will perhaps be true to you when you are present because of his fear of you, but he will deceive you when you are absent and not be true to you."

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Rāfiʿ said, "The Ḥawāriyyun[14] said to ʿĪsā, blessing and peace be upon him, 'What actions are sincere?' He said, 'That for which you do not want people to praise you.' They said, 'What is sincerity towards Allah?' He said, 'It is that you begin with the rights due to Allah before the rights due to people, and if two matters arise one of which is for the sake of Allah, exalted is He, and the other is for the sake of the world, then you begin with the one which is for the sake of Allah, exalted is He.'"

Al-Khaṭṭābī said, "Sincerity is a word denoting a totality which is to intend good for the one who is the object of one's sincerity." He said, "The linguistic root of sincerity is purity, as one says that one has purified the honey, i.e. removed the wax from it. The meaning of sincerity to Allah, glorious is He, is to have sound belief in His Oneness and to intend only Him with one's acts of worship. Sincerity to His Book comprises

believing in it and acting by that which is in it. Sincerity towards His Messenger comprises affirmation of his prophethood and to exert oneself in obedience to him in that which he has commanded and forbidden. Sincerity towards the Muslims in general comprises directing them to those things which are good for them."

Imam Abū ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī said in his book *Taʿẓīm qadraṣ-ṣalāh* –"Honouring the Rank of the Prayer" thatone ofthe people of knowledge had explained this hadith in such a way that cannot be bettered and so we narrate it here word for word, inshā'Allāh, exalted is He.

Muḥammad ibn Naṣr said, "One of the people of knowledge said that the complete explanation of sincerity is that it is the concern of the heart for the one to whom one is sincere, whoever that one is, and it has two aspects: first, is that which is obligatory, and the other is that which is optional. The sincerity towards Allah which is obligatory is the extreme concern of the sincere person to follow the love of Allah in performance of that which He has made obligatory and in avoidance of that which He has forbidden. As for the sincerity which is optional, it is

to prefer His love over the love of one's self. That is [demonstrated] in the case when two different matters present themselves, one of which is for the sake of oneself and the other for one's Lord, then one begins with that which is for one's Lord and delays that which is for oneself. This is the complete explanation of sincerity towards Allah, that of it which is obligatory and that which is optional.

"There is [further] explanation of that and we will mention some of it so that whoever does not understand it when expressed in a general manner will understand it through the explanation: That of it which is obligatory is to avoid that which He has forbidden and establish that which He has made obligatory with all of one's limbs as much as one is able. If one is incapable of establishing one's obligations because of something that happens to one, such as illness, or being held back [from performing them], etc., one must resolve to perform what one is obliged with whenever that cause which prevented one has gone. Allah ﷻ says, 'Nothing is held against the weak and sick nor against those who find nothing to spend, provided they are true to Allah and His Messenger. There is no way open against good-

doers.'[15] So He names them 'good-doers (*muḥsinūn*)' because of the sincerity of their hearts towards Allah when they themselves were prevented from going on *jihād*.

"In some conditions the slave may be exempted from all of the actions, but he is never exempted from [the requirement of] sincerity towards Allah. If he were to be sick to such a degree that it is not possible for him to do anything with his limbs and his tongue except that he still retains consciousness then the requirement of being true to Allah with his heart is still in force, i.e. that he must regret his wrong actions and intend that if he returns to health he will undertake to do that which Allah has made obligatory upon him and avoid that which He has forbidden. If he does not do that, he is not true towards Allah in his heart.

"Similar to that is sincerity towards Allah and towards His Messenger ﷺ in that which he made a duty for people by the command of his Lord. A part of the obligatory sincerity towards Allah is not to be pleased with the act of disobedience which someone does and to love the act of obedience of those who obey Allah and His Messenger.

“As for the sincerity which is optional and not obligatory it is to expend one’s efforts in preferring Allah, exalted is He, over every other beloved, with one’s heart and with all the limbs until there is no superiority of anyone other than Him in the one who is sincere, because when the sincere person exerts himself diligently he will never prefer himself over him [the object of his sincerity], and he undertakes everything in which lies his happiness and his love. The one who is sincere towards his Lord is like that. And the one does extra voluntary acts without real striving is sincere to the extent of his deeds without realising the full extent of sincerity.

“As for sincerity towards His Book, it comprises extreme love of it and to honour its rank since it is the speech of the Creator, and extreme longing to understand it, great concern to reflect on itand to pause in its recitation to seek out the meanings of that which his Master loves for him to understand from it, and then to act by it, for His sake, after understanding it. It is similar with someone of the slaves [of Allah] who is sincere, he understands the counsel of the one who advises him, and if a letter comes to him from him he is concerned to understand it so that he can

undertake whatever it is that he has written in it to him. The one who is sincere towards the Book of his Lord is like that: he is concerned to understand it so that for the sake of Allah he can undertake to do that which He commands him to do as He loves and is pleased with. Then he will spread what he has understood among other slaves, and he will be constant in studying it with love for it, taking on its qualities of character [to which Allah draws attention in it] and becoming refined by its courtesies.

"As for being sincere towards the Messenger ﷺ in his lifetime it was to exert one's fullest effort to obey him and to help him and to co-operate with him, and to spend one's substance when he wanted it and to hasten to love him. As for after his death, it is to be concerned to seek out his Sunnah, and to research his qualities of character and his courtesy, and to honour his command and to continue to undertake [obey] it, to be extremely angry with and to turn away from those who take on something other than his Sunnah as *dīn*, and to be angry with whoever wastes it because of his preference for some worldly matter even if he has [ostensibly] embodied it as his *dīn*, and to love whoever has some relationship to him whether of

kinship, or through marriage [as in-laws], or through emigration [of the Muhājirūn] or support [of the Anṣār] or companionship in Islam even for one hour of the night or the day, and to imitate him in his appearance and clothing.

"As for sincerity towards the leaders of the Muslims, that is by loving their correctness, their maturity of intellect and good management of affairs, and their justice, loving the unification of the ummah under them, and detesting the division of the ummah against them, professing obedience to them in whatever comprises obedience to Allah ﷻ, hating those who hold the view that it is legitimate to rise in revolt against them, and loving to honour them in [matters consistent with] obedience to Allah ﷻ.

"As for sincerity towards the Muslims, it is that one loves for them what one loves for oneself, and dislikes for them what one dislikes for oneself, and has compassion for them, shows mercy to their youth and respects their elders, and grieves for whatever grieves them and rejoices for whatever gives them joy, even if that harms one's own interests in the world, such as making their prices cheaper even though one loses some profit on that which one is selling for trade. In

the same way, he dislikes everything that harms them generally. One should love what is good for them welfare, their unity and concordance and for their blessings to continue, and to help them against their enemies and repel every harm and unpleasant thing from them."

Abū ʿAmr ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ said, "Sincerity is a comprehensive word which comprises the sincere person's undertaking all aspects of good treatment towards the one to whom he is sincere, both in deed and in intention.

"So sincerity towards Allah, exalted is He, is to unify Him and describe Him with the attributes of perfection and majesty, and to purify Him of everything that is opposite or contradictory to them, and to avoid disobeying Him, and to carry out acts of obedience to Him and the things He loves, and to love for His sake and to hate for His sake, and to fight against whoever rejects Him and all of the things that resemble the above, and to call [others] to that and to urge [them] to do it.

"Sincerity towards His Book comprises having *īmān* in it, honouring it, purifying it [of those attributes not befitting it] and reciting it as it ought to be recited,

and sticking to its commands and prohibitions, trying to understand its sciences and its similitudes, reflecting on its *āyāt*, and calling others to it, defending it against the alterations of those who are excessive [either in being too strict or too lenient or in other ways] and against the attacks of deviants.

"Sincerity towards His Messenger ﷺ is close to that. It is *īmān* in him and in that which he brought, respecting and honouring him, holding firm to obeying him, reviving his Sunnah, and awakening excitement for its sciences and spreading them, hostility to whoever is hostile to him and shows hostility to it [the Sunnah] and showing friendship to whoever supports him and it [the Sunnah], taking on his qualities of character, his courteous ways, loving his family and companions, and the like of that.

"Sincerity towards the Muslims' leaders means co-operating with them for the sake of the truth, and obeying them for it and reminding them of it, drawing their attention [to faults and mistakes] with gentleness and subtlety, avoiding rising against them, and supplicating for success for them and urging others to do the same.

“Sincerity towards the Muslims in general means to direct them rightly towards what is of benefit for them, teach them the affairs of their *dīn* and of their world, veil their faults and fulfil their needs, help them against their enemies, defend them and avoid deceiving them and being jealous of them, and love for them what one loves for oneself, and dislike for them what one dislikes for oneself, and everything that resembles that.”

Some of the kinds of sincerity towards them are: protecting them from harm and disliked things, showing preference to the poor and teaching the ignorant, and refuting those of them who deviate from the truth in word or deed with gentleness while bringing them back to the truth, and being kind and courteous to them in commanding the right and forbidding the wrong, loving to remove their corruption even if it means some harm caused to oneself in one’s worldly affairs, as one of the right-acting first generations said, “I wish that all the people would obey Allah [even if it meant] that my flesh was cut up in strips with scissors.” ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to say, “Would that I put the Book of Allah into effect among you and you acted by it, and that as

often as I put a Sunnah into effect among you, a limb of mine would fall off until the last of it would be the departure of my soul!"

One of the kinds of sincerity towards Allah, exalted is He, and towards His Book and His Messenger, and it is one of those types which people of knowledge are particularly qualified for, is to prevent misleading erroneous opinions at source by means of the Book and the Sunnah, and to make their proofs clear on the matters which contradict all the erroneous opinions. Similarly, refutation of weak statements which are minor errors people of knowledge have made, and explaining the proofs of the Book and the Sunnah which refute them. Similarly, explaining what hadith of the Prophet ﷺ are authentic and which are not, by explaining the states of the narrators and those whose narrations are accepted and those whose narrations are not accepted, and to make clear the mistake of those trustworthy people whose narrations are accepted but who made mistakes.

One of the most important types of sincerity is to give sincere good counsel to someone who asks for advice on some affair of his, as he said ﷺ "When one of you asks his brother for sincere good counsel then

let him advise him," and in some hadith, "One of the Muslim's rights over the Muslim is that he should be sincere towards him when he is absent." That means, that when he is mentioned in his absence in a bad way, that one should help him and defend him, and when one sees someone who wants to harm him in his absence, one should stop him from doing that, because being true [to one's brother] in his absence shows the truthfulness of the one who is sincere, as he might make a show of his sincerity when he is present out of flattery and deceive him in his absence.

Al-Ḥasan said, "You will not attain the full due of your sincerity to your brother until you tell him to do that of which you are incapable." Al-Ḥasan said, "One of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ said, 'By the One in whose hand is my soul – if you wish I will swear to you by Allah – the most beloved of the slaves of Allah to Allah are the ones who make Allah beloved to His slaves, and make Allah's slaves beloved to Him, and they exert themselves with sincere good counsel in the land.'"

Farqad as-Sabakhī said, "I read in one of the books, 'The one who loves Allah ﷻ is a commander who has been put in command of the commanders, and his

group are the first group on the Day of Rising, and his assembly will be the closest assembly there. Love is the limit of nearness [to Allah] and striving diligently. Lovers will never tire from the length of their striving for the sake of Allah ﷻ. They love Him and they love to remember and mention Him and they make Him beloved to His creation. They walk among His creation [giving them] sincere good counsel, and they fear their actions for them on the Day on which shameful and disgraceful secrets will be exposed. Those are the close friends of Allah and His beloved ones and the people of His choosing. Those are the ones for whom there is no rest until they meet Him."

According to Abū Bakr al-Muznī, Ibn ʿAliyyah said, "Abū Bakr [aṣ-Ṣiddīq] ﷺ did not excel the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ in fasting or prayer, but rather in something which was in his heart." He said, "The thing which was in his heart was love for Allah ﷻ and sincere good counsel for His creation."

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ ﷺ said, "Those who attained, in our view, did not do so by a great amount of prayer and fasting, but rather they only attained, in our view, by being generous with themselves, by soundness of heart and sincere good counsel to the community."

Ibn al-Mubārak was asked, “Which are the best actions?” He said, “Being true to Allah.”

Maʿmar said, “It used to be said that the person who is sincerest towards you is the one who fears Allah with respect to you.”

Whenever the right-acting first generations meant to counsel someone, they used to counsel him privately. One of them said, “Whoever exhorts his brother when they are together privately, then that is sincere good counsel. Whoever exhorts him in front of a lot of other people has only reproved him.”

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ ﷺ said, “The believer veils [the other’s wrong action] and gives sincere good counsel. The wicked person rends open [the veil concealing a fault or wrong action] and reproaches.”

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād said, “Whenever those who were before you saw something in their brother, they would tell him gently and courteously, so that he would be rewarded for his command and prohibition. Any of these [today] tear holes in their companions and seek to anger their brothers and rip off the veil [concealing their faults and wrong actions].”

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ was asked about telling the ruler to do things that are correct and forbidding him from doing things which are incorrect, and he said, “If you do it and there is no avoiding it, then [do it] privately.”

Imam Aḥmad ﷺ said, “The Muslim does not have to show sincerity towards the People of the Book who live under Islamic governance, but they have to show sincerity towards the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘And sincere good counsel to every muslim,” and that one should be true to and give sincere good counsel to the body of the Muslims and to the generality of them.”

1 The word *naṣīḥah* and *nuṣḥ* are synonyms in the Arabic language. They have very deep and broad meanings as a result of which they are difficult to understand from a straight single-word translation or even an Arabic synonym. Sincerity, in a very broad sense, is probably the closest English word that can be used. This is because the hadith commentators say that the underlying basis of *naṣīḥah* is *ikhlāṣ* i.e. sincerity and, in short, it can be interpreted as ‘wishing the good welfare of another person.’ (*An-Nihāyah* of Ibn Athīr) This encompasses meanings such as ‘good counsel’ which is a common manifestation of *naṣīḥah*. Furthermore, *naṣīḥah* means different things in different contexts

as the forthcoming discussion will reveal that *naṣīḥah* towards the leaders is not the same as *naṣīḥah* towards the general public and *naṣīḥah* towards Allah and His Messenger is again different. In the commentary on this hadith, 'sincerity' will generally be used as the preferred translation for the words while other meanings such as 'sincere good counsel' will be used where that is deemed appropriate to the context. Although this will be discussed in the forthcoming commentary, it will be useful for the reader to bear in mind the broad sense of the words from the outset. Ed.

2 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* and *al-Awsaṭ*

3 Aḥmad (5:254)

4 Al-Bukhārī (57), Muslim (56)

5 Muslim (2162)

6 Aḥmad (3:418)

7 Muslim (1715)

8 Aḥmad (4:80, 82)

9 Al-Bazzār also narrated it.

10 Al-Bukhārī (7150), Muslim (142)

11 "Are true" is *naṣaḥū* i.e. "are sincere". Trans.

12 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 92

13 Aḥmad (4:137)

14 Al-Ḥawariyyūn are "the disciples". Trans.

15 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 92

الحديث الثامن

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُما أَنَّ رَسُولَ الله ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ ؛ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لا إِلَهَ إِلاّ اللهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ الله، وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلاةَ، وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ؛ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ؛ إِلاّ بِحَقِّ الإِسْلامِ، وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللهِ تَعَالَى﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Fighting

I bn ʿUmar ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “I have been commanded to fight people until they witness that thereis no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and they establish the prayer and paythe *zakāh*. Then if they do that they have protected their blood and their property from me except for the right of Islam, and their reckoning is up to Allah, exalted is He.” Al-Bukhārī (25) and Muslim (22) narrated it.

This hadith they narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Wāqid ibn Muḥammad ibn Zayd ibn ʿAbdullāh

ibn ʿUmar from his father from his grandfather ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar.

Respecting his words, “Except for the right of Islam,” this expression is narrated only by al-Bukhārī and not by Muslim.

The meaning of this hadith is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from Anas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I have been commanded to fight people until they witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and His Messenger. Then when they witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and they pray our prayer, face our *qiblah*, and eat our slaughtered animals, it is forbidden us [to shed] their blood and [seize] their property except by their due.”

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I am only commanded to fight people until they establish the prayer and produce the *zakāh* and they witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. If they do that they have held fast to and defended their blood and

their property except by their due, and their reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ."[1]

Ibn Mājah narrated it in an abbreviated form, and narrated the like of it also from a hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ but what is well known from the version of Abū Hurayrah is that there is no mention of establishing the prayer nor producing the *zakāh* in it. In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I have been commanded to fight people until they say, 'There is no god but Allah'. Whoever says there is no god but Allah has protected his property and his person from me except by their due, and his reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ." In the narration of Muslim there is, "...until they witness that there is no god but Allah and believe in me and in what I have brought."

Muslim also narrated it from a hadith of Jābir ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ with the wording of the first hadith of Abū Hurayrah and then added on to the end of it, "Then he recited:

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ

‘So remind them! You are only a reminder. You are not in control of them.’[2]”[3] He also narrated it from a hadith of Abū Mālik al-Ashjaʿī from his father that he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Whoever says there is no god but Allah and rejects whatever is worshipped apart from Allah, then it is forbidden [to spill] his blood and [seize] his property, and his reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ.’”[4]

It has been narrated that Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah said, “That was in the beginning of Islam before the prayer, fasting, *zakāh* and emigration became obligatory.” But this is extremely weak and there are some views as to whether it is an authentic statement of Sufyān, since the narrators of these hadith only accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Madīnah, and some of them became Muslims quite late.

Moreover, his words, “They have protected their blood and their property from me,” shows that he was, at the time of these words, commanded to fight and to kill whoever refused Islam, all of which took place after his emigration to Madīnah. One of the things which is necessarily known is that the Prophet ﷺ used to accept just the two *shahādahs* from everyone who came to him meaning to enter Islam, and that his life

was protected by that, and he would regard him as a Muslim. He rejected what Usāmah ibn Zayd did when he killed the man who said, 'There is no god but Allah' just as he raised the sword above him, and he disapproved of it passionately. The Prophet ﷺ did not stipulate that those who came to him wishing Islam had to cling to the prayer and the *zakāh*. On the contrary, it has been narrated from him that he accepted Islam from a people who stipulated that they should not have to pay *zakāh*. In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Jābir ﷺ that he said, "{The tribe of] Thaqīf stipulated to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that they should not have to pay *zakāh* or wage *jihād*, and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'They will pay the *zakāh* and they will wage *jihād*.'"[5]

In it also there is from Naṣr ibn ʿĀṣim al-Laythī from a man of theirs, "That he came to the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islam on the terms that he should only pray two prayers, and he accepted it from him."[6]

Imam Aḥmad took the stand based on these hadith, and said, "[The acceptance of] Islam can be sound with an unacceptable precondition, but the person is then required to fulfil all of the judgements and rulings of Islam." He sought a proof also from the fact

that Hakim ibn Hizam said, “I pledged allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ on the basis that I should only prostrate from a standing position.” Aḥmad said, “It meant that he would prostrate without bowing.”[7]

Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated with an extremely weak chain of transmission from Anas ﷺ that he said, “The Prophet ﷺ did not accept those who responded to his [invitation to] Islam unless they performed the prayer and paid the *zakāh*, and they were two obligations upon whoever confirmed Muḥammad ﷺ and Islam. That is the words of Allah ﷻ:

فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

‘If you do not and Allah turns to you, at least establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*.’[8]”[9] This is not reliable. However, if we were to accept that it is reliable, then what is meant by it would be that he would not confirm someone who had entered into Islam on the basis of their leaving out the prayer and the *zakāh*. This is true, because he ﷺ commanded Muʿādh, when he sent him to the Yemen, to call them first of all to the two *shahādahs* and he said, “If they obey you in

that then inform them of the prayer and then of the *zakāh*." What is meant by it is that someone who becomes a Muslim, by his entering into Islam he is commanded after that to establish the prayer, and then to produce the *zakāh*. He used to mention the rest of the pillars of Islam along with the two *shahādahs* to whoever asked him about Islam, as he told Jibrīl, upon him blessing and peace, when he asked him about Islam, and as he told the desert Arab with the dishevelled head who came to him asking about Islam.

By this which we have established, a reconciliation between the different wordings of the hadith in this chapter appears which makes clear that all of them are true, because the two phrases of the two *shahādahs* are sufficient to protect whoever says them, and he becomes by that a Muslim. So when he enters Islam and if he establishes the prayer and pays the *zakāh* and undertakes all of the rulings of Islam, then he has whatever the Muslims have and he is responsible for whatever they are responsible for. If he neglects anything of these pillars, then if they are a body of people who have the power of resistance, they are to be fought.

Some think that the meaning of the hadith is that the *kāfir* is to be fought until he says the two *shahādahs*, establishes the prayer and pays the *zakāh*. They regard this as a clear proof that one has to address the kafirun and tell them about the branches [of Islam], but there are other views on this, and the biography of the Prophet ﷺ with respect to his fighting the kafirun shows the contrary of this. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that, "The Prophet ﷺ called ʿAlī on the day of [the battle of] Khaybar and gave him the standard saying, 'Walk and do not turn aside until Allah gives you the victory.' ʿAlī went some distance and then he paused and called out, 'Messenger of Allah, on what basis should I fight people?' He said, 'Fight them on the basis that they say there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and if they do that then they have protected their lives and their property from you except by their due, and their reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ.'"[10] He made the simple response to [the demand for] the two *shahādahs* a protection for their lives and properties except by their due, and a part of their due is if they refuse to do the prayer and pay the *zakāh* after entering Islam, as the

Companions understood, may Allah be pleased with them.

Some of those things from the Qur'ān which show that one must fight the group who refuse to establish the prayer and pay the *zakāh* are His words, exalted is He:

فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَخَلُّوا۟ سَبِيلَهُمْ

"If they make *tawbah*[11] and establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*, let them go on their way."[12] And His words, exalted is He:

فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ

"But if they make *tawbah* and establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*, they are your brothers in the *dīn*."[13] And His words, exalted is He:

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِ

"Fight them until there is no more *fitnah*[14] and the *dīn* belongs to Allah alone,"[15] along with His words, exalted is He:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَٰلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ

"They were only ordered to worship Allah, making their *dīn* sincerely His as people of pure natural belief, and to establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh* – that is the correct *dīn*."[16]

It is reliably established that when the Prophet ﷺ would mount a raid on a people, he would not do it until it was morning, then if he heard the call to prayer [for the dawn prayer, he would know that they were Muslims], but if not he would attack them,[17] even though there was the possibility that they had entered Islam [but were not performing the prayer]. He used to advise raiding parties, "If you hear the call to prayer or see a mosque, do not kill anyone."[18]

He sent ʿUyaynah ibn Ḥuṣayn to some people of Banī al-ʿAnbar and they attacked them because they had not heard a call to prayer. Then later they claimed that they had already accepted Islam before that.

The Prophet ﷺ sent a letter to the people of Oman in which there was, "From Muḥammad the Prophet to the people of Oman. Peace be upon you. Affirm the *shahādah* that there is no god but Allah and that I am

the Messenger of Allah, pay the *zakāh* and walk to the mosques [for prayer], for if you do not I will attack you." Al-Bazzār, aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated it.[19]

This all shows that the state of the people who had entered Islam was considered, and if they established the prayer and paid the *zakāh* [they were safe], but if not there was nothing to prevent them being fought. It was with respect to this that Abū Bakr and ʿUmar ﷺ had an exchange as is recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died and Abū Bakr ﷺ became khalifah after him, and those of the Arabs who became disbelievers did so, ʿUmar ﷺ said to Abū Bakr, 'How can you fight people when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "I was ordered to fight people until they said there is no god but Allah, then whoever says there is no god but Allah, his life and his wealth becomes safe from me except for their due, and his reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ."?' Abū Bakr ﷺ said, 'By Allah! I will fight whoever makes a distinction between the prayer and *zakāh*, because the *zakāh* is that which is due on wealth. By Allah! Even if they were to refuse to pay me a hobbling rope which they used to pay to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant

him peace, I would fight them for refusing it.' ʿUmar said, 'By Allah! I saw that Allah had opened the heart of Abū Bakr to [the validity of] fighting and I knew that it was the truth.'"

Abū Bakr ﷺ took his position to fight them from the words, "Except for their due," showing that fighting someone who has said the two *shahādahs* for "their due" is permissible [because what is due of Islam and the *shahādah* is the prayer and the *zakāh* and the other pillars]. One of their dues is to pay the obligatory dues on wealth. ʿUmar ﷺ thought that the simple statement of the two *shahādahs* would protect life in this world, because he took hold of the general meaning of the beginning of the hadith, just as a group of people think that someone who has said the two *shahādahs* is prevented from entering the Fire in the next life because of their understanding the general meaning of the expressions which are narrated about that, but the matter is not like that. Later, ʿUmar returned to agreement with Abū Bakr ﷺ.

An-Nasā'ī narrated the story of the exchange between Abū Bakr and ʿUmar ﷺ with an increase, which is that Abū Bakr said to ʿUmar, "Rather, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'I have been ordered to

fight people until they witness that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah, they establish the prayer and produce the *zakāh*."[20] Ibn Khuzaymah narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*,[21] but in this version ʿImrān al-Qaṭṭān was mistaken both in the chain of transmission and in the text. That is what the leading [hadith] memorisers say, of whom are ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī, Abū Zurʿah, Abū Ḥātim, at-Tirmidhī and an-Nasā'ī, and that this hadith from the Prophet ﷺ with this wording is not from Abū Bakr nor ʿUmar, and that Abū Bakr only said, "By Allah! I will fight anyone who makes a distinction between the prayer and *zakāh*, because *zakāh* is what is due on wealth," and this he derived – and Allah knows best – from his words in the hadith, "except for their due," and in another version, "except for the due of Islam". So he considered that the due of Islam is the establishment of the prayer and payment of the *zakāh*, just as one of its dues is that one should not commit [an act which transgresses] the limits, and he considered all of that to be part of that which is excepted by his words, "except for their due."

His words, "I will fight whoever makes a distinction between the prayer and the *zakāh*, because

the *zakāh* is what is due on wealth," shows that whoever abandons the prayer should be fought because it is that which is due from the body, and similarly whoever abandons *zakāh*, which is the due on wealth. In this there is an indication that fighting those who give up the prayer is a matter on which there is a consensus, because it was posited here as a principle from which to draw a deduction by analogy, and it is not mentioned in the hadith by which ʿUmar ﷺ advanced his argument but rather it is derived from his words, "except for their due," so the *zakāh* is similar because it is a part of its due, and all of them are dues of Islam.

It is also shown by that which is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Umm Salamah from the Prophet ﷺ, that one must fight those who give up the prayer, "Rulers will be employed over you, and you will recognise [some things they do] and deny [some things]. Whoever denies is secure and whoever disapproves is safe, but whoever is pleased and assists [them]..." They said, "Messenger of Allah, should we not fight them?" He said, "No, as long as they pray."[22]

The ruling regarding those who abandon the rest of the pillars of Islam is they will be fought because of

[abandoning] them as they are fought for abandoning the prayer and *zakāh*.

Ibn Shihāb related from Hanẓalah ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Asqaʿ that Abū Bakr aṣṢiddīq ﷺ sent Khālid ibn al-Walīd ﷺ and told him to fight people over five things, and that "whoever gives up one of the five you should fight him over it as you fight over the five: the witnessing that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishment of the prayer, payment of *zakāh* and the fast of Ramaḍān."[23]

Saʿīd ibn al-Jubayr said, "'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, 'Even if people had given up the Ḥajj we would have fought them over it as we fight them over prayer and *zakāh*.'"

So this is what we have to say about fighting the resistant party who refuse any of these obligations.

As for killing a single individual who refuses any of them, then most of the people of knowledge believe that someone who refuses to do the prayer should be killed, and that is the position of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad, Abū ʿUbayd and others. What is in the two *ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudri demonstrates that: that Khālid ibn al-Walīd sought permission of the

Prophet ﷺ to kill a man, and he said, “No. Perhaps he prays.” Khālid said, “How many a person who prays says with his tongue that which is not in his heart?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “I have not been told to scrutinise people’s hearts and I do not split open their inner selves.”[24]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ there is from ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAdī ibn al-Khiyār that a man of the Anṣār had told him that he came to the Prophet ﷺ and sought his permission to kill a man of the hypocrites, and that the Prophet ﷺ asked, “Does he not witness that there is no god but Allah?” He said, “Of course! But he has no [real] *shahādah*.” He said, “Does he not pray?” He said, “Of course! But he has no prayer.” He said, “Those are the ones whom Allah has forbidden me to kill.”[25]

As for killing the individual who refuses the *zakāh* there are two positions on that with those who take the stand that the one who refuses to do the prayer is to be killed:

First, he is also to be killed, which is the well-known position of Aḥmad ﷺ and he sought proof of that position from this hadith of Ibn ʿUmar.

Second, that he is not to be killed, which is the position of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad in a narration from him.

As for fasting, the position of Mālik, and Aḥmad in a narration from him, is that the person is killed for leaving it out. Ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad in another narration from him, said that he is not to be killed for that, and they sought to prove that by the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar and others with the same meaning, because in none of them is their mention of the fast. For this reason, Aḥmad said, in the narration of Abū Ṭālib, "Nothing has been related about the fast." I say that it has been narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ both as a hadith which is traced back [to the Prophet ﷺ] and as one which stops short [at Ibn ʿAbbās] that someone who gives up the two *shahādahs*, prayer or the fast is a *kāfir* whom it is permissible to kill, as opposed to *zakāh* and Ḥajj. We have looked previously at its explanation in [the chapter on] the hadith, "Islam is built on five."

As for Ḥajj, two versions are narrated from Aḥmad about killing someone for leaving out the Ḥajj. Some of our people [Ḥanbalīs] interpret the version which supports killing [the one who leaves out the Ḥajj] to refer to one who deliberately delays it in such a way as amounts to abandoning it entirely, or who delays it while he has a strong suspicion that he may die in that year. As for someone who delays it believing that it is [obligatory] with flexibility in time [so one does not have to perform it straight away], as many of the people of knowledge say, he is not to be killed for that.

His words, "except for their due," and in another version, "except for the due of Islam," we have seen previously that Abū Bakr included in this due the performance of the prayer and the payment of the *zakāh*, and that some of the people of knowledge also include in that the performance of fasting and payment of *zakāh*. One of its dues is doing those things that are forbidden and which legitimate the spilling of a Muslim's blood. The explanation of "except for their due" has been transmitted as being that, narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī from a hadith of Anas that the Prophet said, "I have been

commanded to fight people until they say there is no god but Allah, and then when they say that they have protected their blood and their wealth from me except for their due, and their reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ." They asked, "What is their due?" He said, "Adultery after once having been married, and *kufr* after *īmān*, and killing another person for [all of] which he is to be killed." It may be that the end of it is the words of Anas, and it has also been said that the correct position is that the entire hadith stops short at him [and is not a hadith of the Prophet ﷺ].

What is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ witnesses to this, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The blood of a Muslim man who witnesses that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah is not permissible [to be spilt] except for one of three [reasons]: the person who has already been married who commits adultery, a person [to be killed in retaliation] for a person, and someone who abandons his *dīn* and separates himself from the community." We will talk about this hadith more completely when we mention it again in its place in this book, inshā'Allāh, exalted is He.

His words ﷻ, “And their reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ,” means that the two *shahādahs* along with establishment of the prayer and payment of the *zakāh* protect the blood of the person who does them and his wealth in this world, except if he does something that makes it permissible [to spill] his blood. As for in the next life, then his reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ. If he is truthful, Allah will enter him into the Garden because of that. If he is lying, then he will be one of the hypocrites in the lowest level of the Fire. We have seen before how in some of the versions in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is that, “Then he recited:

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ إِلَّا مَن تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم

‘So remind them! You are only a reminder. You are not in control of them. But as for anyone who turns away and is *kāfir*, Allah will punish him with the Greatest Punishment. Certainly it is to Us they will return. Then their Reckoning is Our concern,’[26]” meaning, “Your responsibility is only to remind them of Allah and to call them to Him. You are not empowered to put *īmān* in their hearts by force nor are you required to do that,” and then He informed him

that the return of all of the slaves will be to Him and their reckoning is up to Him.

In the *Musnad al-Bazzār* there is from ʿIyāḍ al-Anṣārī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Truly, ‘There is no god but Allah’ is a phrase which is noble to Allah, and which has a place with Him, and it is a phrase that because of it Allah will enter whoever says it into the Garden, and that whoever says it lyingly, it will secure his wealth and his life, and he will meet Allah on the morrow and He will reckon with him.”

By this some sought to prove their view that the repentance of the heretic, and he is the hypocrite, should be accepted if he shows that he has returned to Islam and they don’t hold the view that he should be killed simply because he showed that he was a hypocrite, as the Prophet ﷺ used to treat the hypocrites, treating them under the judgement that they were Muslims outwardly along with his inward knowledge that some of them were hypocrites. This is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī, and of Aḥmad in a narration from him, and alKhaṭṭābi said that it is the position of most of the people of knowledge, and Allah knows best.

1 Aḥmad (5:246)

2 Sūrat al-Ghāshiyah: 21

3 Muslim (21)

4 Muslim (23)

5 Aḥmad (3:341)

6 Aḥmad (3:402)

7 Aḥmad (3:25)

8 Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 13

9 *Taʿẓīm qadr aṣ-ṣalāh* (12)

10 Muslim (2405)

11 *Tawbah* means to turn to Allah. It has degrees, the first of which is to turn to Allah from *kufr* and *shirk* [association of partners with Allah], and this is the station of Islam. Trans.

12 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 5

13 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 11

14 *Fitnah* has a wide range of meanings, including trials, tribulations and even persecution, etc. Its root is the burning action which removes the dross from gold and purifies it. Trans.

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 193

16 Sūrat al-Bayyinah: 5

17 Al-Bukhārī (585), Muslim (382)

18 At-Tirmidhī (1549), Abū Dāwūd (2635)

19 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (6849), and al-Bazzār

20 An-Nasā'ī (6:706)

21 Ibn Khuzaymah (2247)

22 Muslim (1854)

23 Narrated by Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī in *Taʿẓīm qadr aṣ-ṣalāh*.

24 Al-Bukhārī (4094), Muslim (1064)

25 Aḥmad (5:432-3)

26 Sūrat al-Ghāshiyah: 21-26

الحديث التاسع

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿مَا نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ، وَمَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ فَأْتُوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ، فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَثْرَةُ مَسَائِلِهِمْ، وَاخْتِلَافُهُمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

The Forbidden and the Commanded

Abū Hurayrah ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Sakhr ﷺ said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'That which I forbid you, avoid it, and that which I command you, do of it that which you are able, for the thing that destroyed the ones who were before you was their execssive questions and their disagreements with their prophets.'" Al-Bukhārī (7288) and Muslim (1337) narrated it.

Muslim alone narrated this hadith with this wording from the narration of az-Zuhrī from Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and Abū Salamah, both of them from Abū Hurayrah. They both [al-Bukhārī and Muslim] narrated it from Abū'z-Zinād from al-Aʿraj from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Leave me alone as long as I leave you [without commanding or prohibiting anything]. All that destroyed those who were before you was their questioning and disagreeing with their prophets. So when I forbid you something, avoid it, and when I tell you to do something, do of it what you are able." Muslim narrated it in two other ways from Abū Hurayrah with the same meaning.

In a version of his there is mention of the reason for this hadith. In the version of Muḥammad ibn Ziyād, Abū Hurayrah ؓ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed us and said, 'People! Allah has made Ḥajj obligatory on you, so do the Ḥajj.' A man asked, 'Every year, Messenger of Allah?' He remained silent until he [the man] said it three times. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'If I said, "Yes," it would be obligatory and you would not be able [to do it].' Then he said, 'Leave me as long as I leave you, for all that destroyed those who were before you was their questioning and their

disagreement with their prophets. So when I tell you to do something, do of it what you are able; and if I forbid you something, then leave it alone.'"

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it in another way and in an abbreviated form in which he said, "Then His words, exalted is He, were revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ

'You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you.'[1]"[2] It has been narrated in more than one way that this *āyah* was revealed when they questioned the Prophet ﷺ about the Ḥajj and asked, "Is it every year?"

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is that Anas ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed us and a man asked, 'Who is my father?' He said, 'So-and-so,' and so this *āyah* was revealed, 'You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters...'"[3]

Also in both of them there is from Qatādah that Anas said, "They questioned the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so much so that they were pestering him in questioning. He became angry and ascended the

mimbar and said, ‘Whatever you ask me about today, I will explain it to you.’ A man stood up. He was someone who, when he abused men, they would ascribe him to someone other than his father. He asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, who is my father?’ He said, ‘Your father is Ḥudhāfah.’ Then ʿUmar began to say, ‘We are pleased with Allah as our Lord, with Islam as *dīn* and with Muḥammad as Messenger. We seek refuge with Allah from trials.’”[4] When Qatādah narrated this hadith he used to mention this *āyah*, “You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters …”

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is that Ibn ʿAbbās said, “Some people used to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a mocking manner, and so one man asked, ‘Who is my father?’ Another man whose camel was lost asked, ‘Where is my camel?’ So Allah revealed this *āyah*, ‘You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters …’”[5]

Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated in his tafsir the hadith that Abū Hurayrah said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out angry and red in the face, and went and sat on the mimbar. A man stood up and asked, ‘Where am I?’ He said, ‘In the Fire.’ Another stood up and asked, ‘Who is my father?’ He said, ‘Your father is Ḥudhāfah.’ Then ʿUmar ﷺ stood up and said, ‘We are pleased

with Allah as Lord, with Islam as *dīn*, with Muḥammad as Prophet, and with the Qur'ān as imam. Messenger of Allah, we have only recently been in a state of ignorance and *shirk* [associating partners with Allah], and Allah knows best who our fathers are.'" He said, "His anger abated and this *āyah* was revealed, 'You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you.'"[6]

It has also been narrated via al-ʿAwfī from Ibn ʿAbbās respecting His words, "You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you," that he said, "The Messenger of Allah announced to people saying, 'People! Ḥajj has become obligatory upon you.' A man stood and asked, 'Messenger of Allah, is it every year?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was extremely angry [because of it] and he said, 'By the One in Whose hand is my self, if I were to say, "Yes," it would become obligatory, and if it were obligatory you would not be able [to do it], in which case you would have become *kāfir*. Leave me alone as long as I leave you. If I tell you to do something, then do it. If I tell you not to do something, leave it.' Then Allah ﷻ revealed, 'You

who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you.' He forbade them asking about things like that which the Naṣārā asked about in [Sūrat] al-Mā'idah and then they became *kāfir* because of them, and so Allah, exalted is He, forbade that, saying, 'Do not ask about things which, if the Qur'ān were revealed about them in a way which made them severe and difficult, would distress you. Instead wait. Then when the Qur'ān is revealed, if you ask about anything, you will find its explanation.'"[7]

These hadith show that it is prohibited to ask about those things for which there is no need and whose answers would cause harm to the questioner, as for example someone's asking as to whether he would be in the Fire or in the Garden, or whether his real father was the one to whom he was normally ascribed or someone else. They also show that it is prohibited to question in order to cause annoyance, or out of sport or mockery, as many of the hypocrites and others did. Similar to that is asking and seeking for signs as many of those who associated partners [with Allah] and of the People of the Book did. ʿIkrimah and others said, "The *āyah* was revealed about that." Very close in

nature to that is to ask about things which Allah has concealed from His slaves and has not given them to know, such as asking about the moment of the Hour and about the *Rūḥ*.

It indicates also that Muslims are forbidden to ask about a great deal of those things of the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām* which it is feared the question would cause the revelation of some hardship, such as the question as to whether the Ḥajj is every year or not. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* there is from Saʿd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The greatest criminal of the Muslims against the Muslims is someone who asks about something which has not been forbidden and which is then forbidden because of his asking."[8]

When the Prophet ﷺ was asked about *liʿān*[9] he disapproved of the questions and considered them incorrect, lest the man who asked about it before it happened, be tested with it in his own family.[10] "And the Prophet ﷺ used to forbid tittle-tattle and gossip[11] and a great deal of questioning, and squandering property."[12] The Prophet only gave license to ask questions to desert Arabs and the like from the delegations who came to him, in order to draw them closer by that. As for the Muhājirūn and Anṣār who

resided in Madīnah and whose *īmān* was secure in their hearts, they were forbidden to ask questions, as is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān said, "I resided in Madīnah with the Messenger of Allah for a year and nothing prevented me from emigrating but questioning.[13] When any of us emigrated, he did not question the Prophet ﷺ." Also there is in it that Anas ﷺ said, "We were forbidden to question the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about anything, and so it used to please us a great deal if an intelligent man from the country would come and ask him while we would listen."

In the *Musnad* there is that Abū Umāmah said, "Allah had revealed, 'You who have *īmān*! do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you.'" He said, "So we used to disapprove of a great deal of questioning and to guard against that after Allah revealed [this *āyah*] to His Prophet ﷺ." He said, "So we got hold of a desert Arab and enticed him with [the gift of] an outer garment and then we said to him, 'Question the Prophet ﷺ,'"[14] and he mentioned the [rest of the] hadith.

In the *Musnad* of Abū Yaʿlā there is that al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib said, "It used to happen that a year would pass while I wanted to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about something but I was too much in awe of him, and we would wish for desert Arabs [to come and ask questions]."[15]

In the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār there is that Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "I have never seen a people who were better than the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ. They only asked him about twelve things, all of which are in the Qur'ān informed us:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ

'They will ask you about alcoholic drinks and gambling,'[16]

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ

'They will ask you about the Sacred Month...,'[17]

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ

'They will ask you about the crescent moons,'[18]

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى

‘They will ask you about the property of orphans,’[19]”[20] and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ would sometimes ask him about the ruling on some events before they had actually occurred, but [they did so] in order to act by them when they did happen, for example when they said to him, “We will meet the enemy tomorrow and we have no butcher’s knives with us [to slaughter animals for meat]; should we butcher with cane?”[21] They asked him about the rulers whom he informed them would come after him, and asked about obeying them or fighting them. Ḥudhayfah asked about trials and about what he should do during them.[22]

This hadith, i.e. his words ﷺ, “Leave me alone as long as I leave you, for the ones who were before you only perished because of the great number of their questions and their disagreements with their prophets,” shows that questioning is disapproved and blameworthy. Yet some people claim that was specific to the time of the Prophet ﷺ since it was feared that things which were not forbidden might be forbidden

[by revelation in response to the question], or that something might be made obligatory which is difficult to fulfil, and that this is safe after his death ﷺ.

However, it is not this alone which is the reason for the disapproval of questioning. There is another reason, which is what Ibn ʿAbbās indicated in the words we quoted earlier, "But wait, and when the Qur'ān is revealed if you ask about anything you will find its explanation," meaning that everything which the Muslims need for their *dīn*, it must be that Allah explains it in his Mighty Book, and that His Messenger ﷺ conveys it from Him. So there is no need for anyone to question after this, because Allah, exalted is He, knows more about what is of benefit for His slaves than do they themselves. Whatever contains their guidance and benefit, then it must be that Allah, exalted is He, will make it clear to them from the beginning without their questioning, as He says:

يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا۟

"Allah makes things clear to you so you will not go astray."[23] Then there is no need for questioning about anything, particularly not before it happens and there

is a real pressing need for it. What is really needed is to understand that which Allah and His Messenger have told us, and then to follow that and act by it. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ used to be asked about issues and he would refer them to the Qur'ān, just as ʿUmar asked him about the *kalālah* [the person who leaves neither parents nor offspring to inherit from him] and he said, "The *āyah* [revealed in] the summer [at the end of Sūrat an-Nisā'] is enough for you."[24]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ indicated in this hadith that being occupied with putting his command into effect and avoiding his prohibition will keep one busy so that one doesn't need to question, for he said, "If I forbid you something, then avoid it, and if I tell you to do something, then do of it what you are able." That which the Muslim ought specifically to be concerned about and occupied with is to find out what has come from Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, then to exert himself diligently to understand it and grasp its meanings; then to occupy himself in affirming it, if it is one of the matters of knowledge. If it is one of the matters of practice, then he must exert himself to his full capacity in carrying out as much of the command as he is able, and avoiding that which he has been forbidden, and

his entire concern should be directed to that end and to no other. That was the condition of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and of their Followers in good-doing (*iḥsān*), in seeking useful knowledge from the Book and the Sunnah.

When he hears command and prohibition, if the listener's concern is directed towards speculation about matters which might or might not happen, then this is one of those things which are comprised under the prohibition and which detract from the diligence in putting the command into practice. A man asked Ibn ʿUmar about touching the [Black] Stone, and he said to him, "I saw the Prophet ﷺ touching and kissing it." The man said to him, "What do you think [I should do] if I am kept away from it by force? What do you think [I should do] if I am crowded out?" Ibn ʿUmar said to him, "Put this 'what do you think?' in the Yemen. I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ touching it and kissing it." At-Tirmidhī narrated it.[25] What Ibn ʿUmar wanted to say is that you should only concern yourself with modelling yourself on the Prophet ﷺ and there is no need to presuppose the incapacity to do that or to make it difficult before it happens, because the resolve to be determined to follow it

might slacken. Becoming knowledgeable in the *fiqh* of the *dīn* and asking questions about knowledge are only praiseworthy for the purpose of action and not for showing off or debate.

It has been narrated from ʿAlī ﷺ that he mentioned some trials which would occur at the end of time, and ʿUmar said to him, "When will that be, ʿAlī?" He said, "When *fiqh* is acquired for purposes other than the *dīn* and knowledge is learnt for [purposes] other than action and the world is sought by means of actions which are meant for the next life."[26]

Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said, "How will it be with you when a trial envelops you [which endures so long that] during it the young will grow up and the old will become senile, and it will be taken as a Sunnah and then if it is changed one day someone will say, 'This is objectionable!'" They said, "When will that happen?" He said, "When your trustworthy ones are few and your leaders are many, your people of *fiqh* are few and there are many reciters, and *fiqh* is acquired for [purposes] other than the *dīn* and the world is sought by means of actions which are meant for the next life." ʿAbd ar-Razzāq related it in his book.[27] For this reason

many of the Companions and the Followers used to disapprove of asking about matters before they had happened, and they would not reply [to questions] about them. ʿAmr ibn Murrah said, "'Umar came out to the people and said, 'I forbid you asking us about what has not happened, because we have [enough] work to do with what has happened."[28]

Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ said, "Do not ask about something that has not yet happened because I heard ʿUmar ﷺ cursing someone who asks about something that has not yet happened."[29]

When Zayd ibn Thābit ﷺ was asked about something he would say, "Has this happened?" If they said, "No." He would say, "Leave it until it happens."[30]

Masrūq said, "I asked Ubayy ibn Kaʿb about something and he said, 'Has it happened yet?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'Give us rest from it until it happens. If it happens, we will exert our reasoning on your behalf.'"[31]

Ash-Shaʿbī said, "'Ammār was asked about an issue and he said, 'Has this happened yet?' They said, 'No.' He said, 'Then leave us until it happens. If it happens, we will undertake [to answer it] for you in spite of difficulties.'"[32]

Aṣ-Ṣult ibn Rāshid said, “I asked Ṭāwus about something and he chided me saying, ‘Has this happened?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘By Allah?’ I said, ‘By Allah!’ He said, ‘Our people told us that Muʿādh ibn Jabal ﷺ said, “People! do not hasten the trial before it happens so that it goes off here and there with you. If you do not hasten trial before it happens, there will always be someone among the Muslims who, when he is asked, will be rightly directed [in his reply]” or he said, “will be helped [by Allah is his reply].”’”[33]

Abū Dāwūd narrated in the book *al-Marāsīl*[34] ascribing it as a *marfūʿ* hadith by way of ʿIjlān from Ṭāwus that Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Do not hasten the trial before it happens, for if you do not do that there will always be someone among the Muslims who, when he speaks, will be rightly directed or helped [by Allah]. If you hasten [the trial], the paths will diverge here and there with you.’” The reason for regarding it as a *mursal* hadith is because Ṭāwus did not hear from Muʿādh.

He [Abū Dāwūd] also narrated it from Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr from Abū Salamah from the Prophet ﷺ with the same meaning but also as a *mursal* hadith.

Ḥajjāj ibn Minhāl narrated, “Jarīr ibn Ḥāzim said, ‘I heard az-Zubayr ibn Saʿīd saying that a man from Banī Hāshim said, “I heard our shaykhs narrating that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘There will always be those among my community who, when they are asked, will be rightly directed and guided, until they ask each other about that whose explanation has not been revealed. When they do that it will take them off here and there.’”’”[35]

It has been narrated from aṣ-Ṣunābiḥī from Muʿāwiyah that the Prophet ﷺ forbade questions asked to challenge the person of knowledge and lead him into making a mistake.[36] Imam Aḥmad ﷺ narrated it[37] and al-Awzāʿī explained it saying, “They are troublesome cases.” ʿĪsā ibn Yūnus said, “They are those [questions] of ‘How [is this] and how [is that]?’ for which there is no need.”

It has been narrated in a hadith of Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There will be people among my community who will lead their people of *fiqh* into making mistakes with puzzling questions; those are the worst of my community.”[38]

Al-Ḥasan said, “The worst slaves of Allah are the ones who pursue the worst cases in order to confuse

the slaves of Allah by them."

Al-Awzāʿī said, "When Allah wants to deprive His slave the blessing of knowledge, He puts questions on his tongue which are designed to cause difficulty to people of knowledge. I think they are the people with the least knowledge."

Ibn Wahb narrated from Mālik, "I came upon this city [Madīnah] at a time when they disapproved of this excessiveness in which people are involved today," meaning [excessive] questioning.

He [Ibn Wahb] also said, "I heard Mālik finding fault with too much speech and too many *fatwās*, and then he said, 'He speaks as if they were sentences exciting passion, saying, "It is like that, it is like that," braying in his speech.'"

He said, "I heard Mālik expressing disapproval of responding to great numbers of questions and he said, 'Allah ﷻ says:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

"They will ask you about the *Rūḥ*. Say: 'The *Rūḥ* is my Lord's concern,'"[39] and He did not answer the question.'" Mālik used also to disapprove of debate

and argumentation about the Sunnah. Al-Haytham ibn Jamīl said, “I said to Mālik, ‘Abū ʿAbdullāh, should someone who has knowledge of the sunnahs argue for them?’ He said, ‘No! one should inform others of the Sunnah and then if it is accepted from one... and if not, one should be silent.’”

Isḥāq ibn ʿĪsā said, “Mālik used to say, ‘Wrangling and arguing about knowledge remove the light of knowledge from a man’s heart.’”

Ibn Wahb said, “I heard Mālik saying, ‘Wrangling and arguing about knowledge harden the heart and create rancour.’”

Abū Shurayḥ al-Iskandarānī was one day in his assembly and was asked many questions, so he said, “Your hearts have become polluted from this day, so stand up and go to Abū Ḥumayd Khālid ibn Ḥumayd and polish your hearts. Learn these desirable [extra actions] because they renew worship, create *zuhd*[40], and entail friendship. Ask few questions unless it is about something that has happened, because they harden the heart and cause hostility.”

Al-Maymūnī said, “I heard Abū ʿAbdullāh – meaning Aḥmad – being asked about a matter and he

said, ‘Has this matter happened? Have you been afflicted by it yet?’”

In this respect people are divided into three categories:

Of the followers of the people of hadith there are those who close the door of questioning to the extent that their understanding and knowledge of the limits [laws and commandments] that Allah revealed to His Messenger are reduced and they become carriers of *fiqh* who are not themselves people of *fiqh*.

Among the people of *fiqh* who champion reasoning there are those who are very expansive in generating cases and issues before they happen – those which would ordinarily happen and those which would not – and they occupy themselves with finding answers for them, and disputing about them, arguing in their favour so much that hearts are divided and separated by it, and because of which erroneous opinions as well as rancour, hostility and hatred become settled in their hearts, connected to which are often the intentions of winning [the debate], seeking celebrity and vainglory, and seeking to turn people’s faces towards them, which the people of knowledge who seek Divine

pleasure disparage and which the Sunnah shows to be ugly and forbidden.

As for the possessors of *fiqh* among the people of hadith who act according to it, the greater part of their concern is to find out the meanings of the Book of Allah ﷻ and [find out] what clarifies it of the authentic Sunnahs and verdicts of the Companions and those who followed them in good deeds,[41] and [to find out about] the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and to recognise the authentic of it and the inauthentic, gathering its *fiqh* and understanding it, and reflecting on its meanings. Then [they are concerned] with knowing the words of the Companions and those who followed them in good deeds, on all the types of knowledge such as commentary [on Qur'ān] and hadith; cases of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*; the principles of the Sunnah, doing without, things which soften the heart; etc. This is the way of Imam Aḥmad and those of the scholars of hadith who seek divine pleasure who are in accord with him. In coming to know this [the above] there is such peoccupation [with true knowledge], that it would keep one away from the innovated reasoning about matters of no benefit and which do not happen.

Debating about such matters only creates exchanges in which there is dispute and argumentation and a great deal of ‘he said’ and ‘someone said.’ Imam Ahmad often used to say, when asked about cases which had been artificially generated and which do not happen, “Give us rest from these innovated issues.”

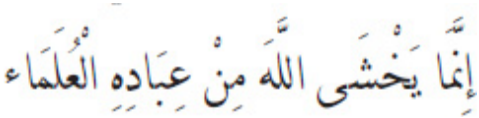
How excellent is that which Yūnus ibn Sulaymān as-Saqaṭī said, “I considered the matter and found it to be hadith and reasoning. I found in the hadith mention of the Lord ﷻ and of His Lordship, magnification and exaltation of Him, mention of the Throne, description of the Garden and the Fire, mention of the Prophets and Messengers, the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām*, exhortation to keep good ties with one’s kin, and [found] all good in it. I considered reasoning and found in it plotting, treachery, legal stratagems, and severing links with kin, and [found] that all evil lies in it.”

Aḥmad ibn Shibawayh said, “Whoever wants knowledge [for] the grave should take hold of traditions. Whoever wants knowledge [for] bread should take hold of reasoning.”

Whoever travels the path of seeking knowledge according to what we have mentioned is usually able to understand how to answer questions about events

which actually happen, because their principles are to be found in those principles that have been indicated, but one has to travel this path behind its imams about whom there is consensus that they are guided and have understanding, such as ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Abū ʿUbayd and those who travel their path, because whoever claims to travel this path some other way than their way of travelling will fall into waterless deserts and go to destruction, and he will take a stand on that on which it is not permissible to take a stand, and abandon that which it is obligatory to do.

The basis of the whole matter is that one intends the Face of Allah ﷻ by it, and to draw closer to Him by knowledge of that which He revealed to His Messenger, and to travel his path and act by that, and to summon people to it. Whoever is like that, Allah will help him and direct him aright and inspire him with right guidance, and He will teach him what he doesn't know, and so he will be among the people of knowledge who are praised in the Book in His words, exalted is He:



Only those of His slaves with knowledge have fear of Allah"[42] and [he will be]" of those who are firmly established in knowledge. Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated in his commentary the hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' ﷺ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about those who are 'firmly rooted in knowledge',[43] and he said, "Whoever's oath is true, whose tongue is truthful, whose heart is upstanding, whose stomach and private parts abstain [from what is unlawful], then he is the one who is firmly rooted in knowledge."[44]

Nāfiʿ ibn Zayd said, "It is said that the firmly rooted in knowledge are those who abase themselves to Allah and humble themselves to Allah seeking His good pleasure. They do not try to exalt themselves above those who are over them nor despise those who are beneath them."[45] Evidence of this is in the words of the Prophet ﷺ "The people of the Yemen have come to you. They are more benevolent in their hearts and finer in their minds. *Īmān* is Yemeni, *fiqh* is Yemeni and wisdom is Yemeni."[46] This is an indication from him about Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī and those of the people of knowledge of the Yemen who were on his path, and then about those such as Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī, Uways al-Qarnī, Ṭāwus, Wahb ibn

Munabbih and other Yemeni people of knowledge. All of them were men of divine knowledge, who sought Allah's pleasure, who feared Allah. All of them had knowledge of Allah and were afraid of Him. Some of them had greater knowledge of the judgements of Allah and the rulings of His *dīn* than others. They were not distinguished from other people by a great deal of tittle-tattle, research or argumentation.

Similarly, Muʿādh ibn Jabal ﷺ was the most knowledgeable of people on the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām*, and he is the one who will be assembled in front of the people of knowledge by the distance of an arrow that is shot, on the Day of Rising. His knowledge did not consist in wide-ranging and vast numbers of cases, and indeed we have already seen that he disapproved of discussing that which had not yet occurred. Yet he was knowledgeable of Allah and knowledgeable of the sources of His *dīn* ﷺ. Someone said to Imam Aḥmad, "After you whom should we ask?" He said, "ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq." Someone said, "He doesn't have vast knowledge." He said, "He is a right-acting man of those who are rightly directed to the truth." He was asked about Maʿrūf al-Karkhī and he said, "He had with with him the source of knowledge: fear of Allah,"

which refers back to the words of one of the right-acting first generations, “Fear of Allah is sufficient knowledge, and being deluded about Allah is sufficient ignorance.” This is a vast chapter and its thorough study would be too lengthy.

Let us return to the explanation of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ and say that whoever does not occupy himself with great numbers of cases the like of which are not found in the Book of Allah nor in the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ but rather occupies himself with understanding the speech of Allah and of His Messenger, intending by that to be obedient to His commands and to avoid His prohibitions, then he is one of those who submits to the command of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in this hadith, and who acts by its requirements. Those whose concern is not with trying to understand that which Allah revealed to His Messenger and who occupy themselves with generating [hypothetical] cases which may or may not happen and take on the responsibility for finding answers to them simply by reasoning, then it is feared that they are in opposition to this hadith, practising that which it prohibits and abandoning that which it commands.

Know that the great number of things which happen for which there is no source in the Book nor in the Sunnah, only happen because of not being occupied with obedience to the commands of Allah and His Messenger and with avoidance of the prohibitions of Allah and His Messenger. If those who intend to do actions would only ask about what Allah has ruled concerning those actions and then obey it, and if they ask what He forbids and avoid it, then events would take place within the limits laid down by the Book and the Sunnah. However, people only act according to their own reasoning and desire, so that the generality of cases occur in a way contrary to what Allah legislates, and often it becomes difficult to refer them back to the judgements mentioned in the Book and the Sunnah because of their remoteness from them.

In general, whoever obeys that which the Prophet ﷺ commands in this hadith, and keeps away from that which he prohibits, and is occupied with that and nothing else, will attain safety in the world and the next life. Whoever is opposed to that and is busy with whatever occurs to him and with that which he himself thinks good, will fall into that which the

Prophet ﷺ warned against, i.e. the state of the People of the Book who perished because of the great number of questions they asked and their disagreements with their prophets, and their lack of submission and obedience to their messengers.

About his words ﷺ, "When I forbid you something, avoid it. When I tell you to do something, do of it what you are able," one of the people of knowledge said, "It is derived from this that the prohibition is more serious than the command, because there is no concession allowing one to do any part of the prohibition, but the command is conditional on the ability [to do it]." This has been narrated from Imam Aḥmad ﷺ. One person said something similar, "Both the right-acting and the wrong-acting do right actions, but only the truly sincere abandon acts of disobedience."[47]

It is narrated from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Protect yourself from [doing] those things which are forbidden and you will be the most worshipful of people."[48] ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ said, "Whoever would be happy to outrun the hard-working one who exerts himself, then let him restrain himself

from wrong actions."[49] This has also been narrated from her as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

Al-Ḥasan said, "Worshippers do not worship with anything better than abandoning that which Allah forbids them."

The outward meaning is that what is intended by that which is transmitted concerning the superiority of abandoning those things which are prohibited over doing acts of obedience only applies to voluntary extra acts. Otherwise, the category of doing obligatory actions is better than the category of abandoning forbidden actions, since actions are intended for themselves, but what is sought of forbidden things is their non-existence. Therefore, [abandoning that which is forbidden] does not need an intention, in contrast to actions. For that reason, the category comprising abandoning deeds may be *kufr*, such as abandoning *tawḥīd*, or abandoning the pillars of Islam or some of them according to what we saw previously, in contrast to committing acts which are forbidden which do not necessarily involve *kufr*. The words of Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ testify to that, "To reject a small coin which is *ḥarām* is better than one hundred thousand which you spend in the way of Allah."

One of the right-acting first generations said, “Giving up one small coin which is displeasing to Allah is more beloved to me than [performing] five hundred *ḥajjs*.”

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, “Remembering Allah with the tongue is good, but better than it is that the slave remembers Allah when he is about to disobey Him and then withholds himself from it.”

Ibn al-Mubārak said, “That I reject a dirham which is doubtful is preferrable to me than giving one hundred thousand after one hundred thousand up to six hundred thousand in *ṣadaqah*.”

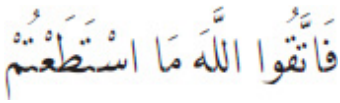
ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, “*Taqwā* does not consist in standing in prayer at night and fasting during the day and then confusion in between the two, but rather *taqwā* is the performance of that which Allah makes obligatory and the abandonment of that which Allah forbids. If along with that there is action, then it is good upon good,” or however it was that he said it.

He also said, “I would love not to pray anything other than the five prayers and the *witr*, pay the *zakāh* without paying any single dirham as voluntary *ṣadaqah*, fast Ramaḍān and never fast one single extra

day, and perform the single obligatory Ḥajj of Islam without ever doing one extra Ḥajj, and then put the excess of my strength to use in restraining myself from that which Allah has forbidden me."

The upshot of their words shows that avoiding things which are forbidden, even if they are very few things, is better than doing extra optional acts of obedience, because that is obligatory and these [extra voluntary acts] are optional.

A group of the later generations say that he only said ﷺ, "When I forbid you something, then avoid it, and when I command you to do something, do of it what you are able," because obedience to a command only comes about through action, and the existence of action depends on preconditions and causes, some of which one may not be capable of, and so for that reason he made the proviso that one is able to do it, as Allah couples His command to have *taqwā* with the ability to do so, when He, exalted is He says:



"So have *taqwā* of Allah, as much as you are able to."[50] He says about the Ḥajj:

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلاً

“Ḥajj to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all mankind – those who can find a way to do it.”[51]

As for prohibition, what is desired from it is the absence [of the actions which are prohibited] and that is the primary situation, so that what is intended is the continuance of that original absence [of what is prohibited], and that is possible and there is nothing in it which one is unable to do. But there is also another view on this, because the motive for doing acts of disobedience may be strong and a slave may have no patience to prevent himself from doing the act of disobedience although he is able to do it. Thus restraining himself from it requires great struggle, which may often be harder for people than the simple struggle with the self to do acts of obedience. For that reason, one very often finds people who exert themselves in doing acts of obedience but who are not strong enough to give up forbidden things. ʿUmar was asked about people who strongly desire some act of disobedience but don’t do it, and he said:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

"Those are people whose hearts Allah has tested for *taqwā*. They will have forgiveness and a great reward."[52]

Yazīd ibn Maysurah said, "Allah says in one of the Books, 'O youth who has given up his appetites and who has spent his youth for My sake, to Me you are like one of My angels.'"[53] He said, "How powerful is appetite in the body! It is like the burning of fire. How can the chaste be safe from it?"[54]

The reality in this is that Allah does not impose actions which they are not able to do as a responsibility on the slaves. He removes the responsibility of performing many actions, simply because of the difficulty involved, as a concession and a mercy to them. However, in the case of prohibitions, no-one is excused for committing them just because of the power of the impulse and the appetites, but rather He imposes on them that they must abandon them in every state. He permits the consumption of forbidden food in the case of necessity, only to the extent that will keep one alive and not for the reason of enjoyment and appetite. From this we see the

soundness of what Imam Aḥmad ﷺ said, “Prohibition is more important than command.” It has been narrated in the hadith of Thawbān and others that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Be upright and upstanding! and you will never be able to do it fully,”[55] meaning you will never be able to be completely upright and upstanding.

Al-Ḥakam ibn Ḥazn al-Kulafī said, “I went in a delegation to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and prayed the Jumuʿah with him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood leaning on his staff or his bow, praised Allah with some few blessed, good words, and then said, ‘People, you will never be able to,’ or ‘you will never do everything that I command you to, but do what is right and rejoice.’” Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[56]

In his words ﷺ, “When I tell you to do something, then do of it what you are able,” there is an indication that whoever is unable to do all of that which he is commanded, but is able to do some of it, must do what of it is possible. This applies to many casees:

for example, in purification, when one is able to do some of it, but unable to do the rest, whether because of the absence of water or because of an infirmity in

some of the limbs but not others, then one has to do of it what one is able and then perform *tayammum* for the remainder. Both *wuḍū*' and *ghusl* are the same in this case, according to the most well-known position.

Similarly in the prayer, whoever is incapable of doing the obligatory prayer standing must pray sitting, and if he is incapable of that, then he must do it lying down. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from ʿImrān ibn Husayn ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Pray standing, and if you are not able, then seated, and if you are not able, then [lying] on the side." If one is completely incapable of all of that, then one must indicate with his eye [or a limb] intending the prayer, and the [obligation of] the prayer is never removed, according to the most well-known position.

Similarly, there is the *zakāt al-fiṭr*. If one is able to pay some part of a ṣāʿ [but not an entire *ṣāʿ*], the authentic position is that one is required to pay it. However, [in the case of fasting] someone who is able to fast part of the day, but unable to complete the day, is not required to do so, and on this there is no disagreement because fasting part of a day is not in itself an act of drawing near [to Allah]. Again, if one is able to free a part of a slave [because one shares in

ownership of the slave] in expiation of a wrong action, that is not required since partial freeing is not liked in the law, but rather one is commanded to complete [the liberation] by every means possible.

As for someone who misses standing on ʿArafah during the Ḥajj, then should he complete what remains of the Ḥajj, such as spending the night at Muzdalifah and stoning the pillars, or not? No, rather he should confine himself to performing *ṭawāf* and *saʿy* [which are part of the *ʿUmrah*], and he will break his *iḥrām* because of [the completion of a *ʿUmrah*] according to two narrations from Ahmad, the most well known of which is that he will confine himself to performing *ṭawāf* and *saʿy*, because spending the night [at Muzdalifah] and stoning [the pillars] are attendant upon standing at ʿArafah and are consequences of it. Allah, exalted is He, only commands His remembrance at *al-Mashʿar al-Ḥarām* [Muzdalifah] and during the Numbered Days [of the *ʿĪd* during which the pillars are stoned] for those who go forth from ʿArafāt, so whoever does not stand at ʿArafah is not commanded to do them, nor someone who performs *ʿUmrah*, and Allah knows best.

1 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 101

2 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in his *Sunan* (2:282)

3 Al-Bukhārī (4621), Muslim (2359)

4 Al-Bukhārī (6362), Muslim (2359)

5 Al-Bukhārī (4622)

6 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in his *tafsīr* (7:53)

7 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in his *tafsīr* (7:54)

8 Al-Bukhārī (7689) and Muslim (2358)

9 *Liʿān*, literally "cursing", is when a husband swears four oaths accusing his wife of adultery laying a curse upon himself if he is a liar, and she exonerates herself by swearing four oaths that he is lying and laying a curse upon herself if she is lying. Trans.

10 Muslim (1493), at-Tirmidhī (1202)

11 The words in Arabic are *qīla wa qāla* which is literally, "It was said and he said." Trans.

12 Al-Bukhārī (1477)

13 In other words he didn't migrate so that he would be able to continue asking questions. Trans.

14 Aḥmad (5:266)

15 Abū Yaʿlā in his *al-Musnad al-Kabīr* as mentioned in *al-Maṭālib al-ʿaliyah*

16 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 217

17 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 215

18 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 188

19 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 218

20 The hadith is also narrated by ad-Dārimī (125) and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (11:454)

21 Part of a hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī (2488 and 2507) and Muslim (1968)

22 Al-Bukhārī (7084)

23 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

24 Muslim (1617)

25 At-Tirmidhī (861)

26 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (11:360)

27 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (11:359), Ibn Abī Shaybah (37156)

28 Ad-Dārimī (1:50)

29 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (2:139)

30 Ad-Dārimī (1:50)

31 Ad-Dārimī (1:56)

32 Ad-Dārimī (1:50)

33 Ad-Dārimī (1:56)

34 *Marāsīl* is the plural of *mursal*.

35 Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar mentioned the hadith in Fatḥ al-bārī.

36 *Ughlūṭah "a question by which a person, a man of learning, is vied or contended with, in the endeavour to cause him to make a mistake, in order that he may be lowered; and by which his judgement or opinion, is sought to be made erroneous*." Lane's *Lexicon*, entries translated from *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* and *Tāj al-ʿarūs*. See also the definition in *an-Nihāyah fī gharīb al-hadith*. Trans.

37 Aḥmad (5:435), also Abū Dāwūd (3656)

38 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (1431)

39 Sūrat al-Isrā': 85

40 *Zuhd*: doing-without that which is not needed. Trans.

41 The *Tābiʿūn* Followers.

42 Sūrah Fāṭir: 28

43 Sūrat Ali ʿImrān: 7

44 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān* (6637)

45 Ibn Kathīr mentions in his tafsir that Ibn al-Mundhir narrated it.

46 Al-Bukhārī (4388) and Muslim (52)

47 Abū Nuʿaym narrates this as the saying of Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh at-Tustarī, in *al-Ḥilyah*

48 This is part of a hadith narrated by Aḥmad (2:310) and at-Tirmidhī (2305)

49 Abū Yaʿlā (4950)

50 Sūrat at-Taghābun: 16

51 Sūrat Ali ʿImrān: 97

52 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 3. Ibn Kathīr mentions that Aḥmad narrated this in *az-Zuhd*

53 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

54 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

55 Aḥmad (5:276-277) and Ibn Mājah (277)

56 Abū Dāwūd (1097), Aḥmad (4:212)

الحديث العاشر

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿إِنَّ اللهَ طَيِّبٌ، لا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، فَقَالَ: [يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا] . وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: [يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ] ، ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ: ﴿الرَّجُلُ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ: يَا رَبِّ، يَا رَبِّ ؛ وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ، فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِكَ﴾ . رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Pure Wholesome Food

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Allah, exalted is He, is pure and only accepts that which is pure. Allah orders the believers with that with which he ordered the Messengers, and He says, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا

“Messengers, eat of the good things (*ṭayyibāt*) and act rightly”[1] and He says, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

"You who have *īmān*! eat of the good things (*ṭayyibāt*) We have provided for you.'"[2] Then he mentioned a dishevelled dusty man lengthening his journey and stretching out his hands to the sky, [saying], 'Lord, Lord!' and his food is *ḥarām*, his drink *ḥarām*, his clothing *ḥarām*, and he has been fed on the *ḥarām*, so how can that be answered?" Muslim narrated it (1015).

Muslim narrated this hadith from the narration of Fuḍayl ibn Marzūq from ʿAdī ibn Thābit from Abū Ḥāzim from Abū Hurayrah. At-Tirmidhī also narrated it and said, "Good [less reliable than *ṣaḥīḥ*], scarce [the chain of transmission at some point goes through a single narrator]." Fuḍayl ibn Marzūq is medium trustworthy in transmission and Muslim narrated from him but not al-Bukhārī.

His words ﷻ "Allah, exalted is He, is pure," have also been narrated in a hadith of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ as, "Allah is pure and He loves that which is pure, [He is] clean and loves cleanliness, [He is] liberally generous and He loves liberality," and it is narrated by at-Tirmidhī but there are some things

said about his chain of transmission.[3] *Ṭayyib* here means ‘pure’.

The meaning is that Allah ﷻ is Wholly Pure and free of all defects and flaws. This is as in His words, exalted is He:

وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ

“Good women are for good men and good men are for good women. The latter are innocent of what they say.”[4] What is meant is ‘free of the stains and pollution of indecency.’

The meaning of his words, “...and He only accepts that which is pure,” has also been transmitted in the hadith on *ṣadaqah*: “No one gives *ṣadaqah* from pure earnings, and Allah only excepts that which is pure...”[5] meaning that Allah only accepts *zakāh* and *ṣadaqah* which are pure and *ḥalāl*.

Some say that the meaning of this hadith about which we are talking, “...and He only accepts that which is pure,” is more general and universal than that, and that He only accepts actions which are good, and pure of all things which would corrupt them such as ostentation and conceit, and [He only accepts]

property which is pure and *ḥalāl*, because ‘purity’ is used to describe actions, sayings and beliefs, all of which are categorised as either pure or foul.

Some have said that all of this is comprised under His words, exalted is He:

قُل لَّا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ

“Say: ‘Bad things and good things are not the same, even though the abundance of the bad things may seem attractive to you.’”[6]

Allah, exalted is He, divides all speech into pure and foul when He says:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ

“Do you do not see how Allah makes a metaphor of a good (*ṭayyib*) word: a good tree.”[7]

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ

“The metaphor of a corrupt word is that of a rotten tree.”[8] He says, exalted is He:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

"Good (*ṭayyib*) speech rises to Him and right action raises it up,"[9] and He describes the Messenger as making *ḥalāl* those things which are pure (*ṭayyibāt*) and making *ḥarām* those things which are foul.[10]

Some say that words, deeds and beliefs are also comprised under that. Allah, exalted is He, describes the *mu'minūn* as pure, in His words, exalted is He:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ

"those the angels take in a virtuous state (*ṭayyibūn*)," [11] and the angels say at death, "Come out, pure self which was in a pure body," and the angels greet them with the greeting of peace as they enter the Garden, saying to them, "Peace be upon you, you have been pure." It has been narrated in a hadith that, "When the *mu'min* visits a brother of his for the sake of Allah, then the angels say to him, "You are pure and your walking is pure and a house has been prepared for you in the Garden."[12]

All of the *mu'min* is pure, his heart, his tongue and his body because of the *īmān* that resides in his heart,

the remembrance [of Allah] that manifests on his tongue and the right actions on his limbs, which are [all] the fruit of *īmān* and which are comprised under the term [*īmān*]. Allah ﷻ accepts all of these pure things.

One of the most important things by which the *mu'min* obtains pure actions is pure food which is *ḥalāl*, for by that his action becomes pure.

In this hadith there is an indication that action is only acceptable and it is only pure through eating *ḥalāl* food, and that eating *ḥarām* food corrupts action and prevents its acceptance, for he said after the affirmative statement, "...and He only accepts that which is pure" [the statement that] "Allah orders the *mu'minūn* with that with which he ordered the Messengers, and He says, exalted is He, 'Messengers, eat of the good things and act rightly,' and He says, exalted is He, 'You who have *īmān*! eat of the good things We have provided for you.'"

What is meant by this is that the Messengers and their communities are commanded to eat of the pure things which are *ḥalāl*, and [they are commanded] to do right action, and that as long as the food is *ḥalāl*,

then the action is acceptable. However, when the food is not *ḥalāl*, how can the action be acceptable?

Then what he mentioned after that about the supplication and [his saying] "how can it be acceptable along with the *ḥarām*?" is an example of the unlikelihood that actions can be acceptable while nourished on *ḥarām* food. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated, with a chain of transmission on which there are some views, from Ibn ʿAbbās ﵄ that he said, "This *āyah* was recited in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا

'Mankind! eat what is good (*ṭayyib*) and lawful on the earth.'[13] Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ stood up and said, 'Messenger of Allah, ask Allah to make me one whose supplication is answered.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Saʿd, make your food pure and your supplication will be answered. By the One in whose hand is the self of Muḥammad, the slave will cast a *ḥarām* morsel in his belly and because of it Allah will not accept his action for forty days, and any slave whose flesh grows upon usury then the Fire is more appropriate for it."[14]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ but also with a chain of transmission about which people hold views, there is that Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ said, “Whoever buys a robe for ten dirhams in the price of which there is one dirham which is *ḥarām*, then Allah will not accept his prayer as long as he wears that robe.” Then he put two fingers in his ears and said, “May they become deaf if I did not hear it from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”[15] The same meaning is narrated in a hadith of ʿAlī ﷺ ascribed [to the Prophet ﷺ], and al-Bazzār and others narrated it with an extremely weak chain of transmission.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with a chain of transmission in which there is some weakness, from a hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When a man goes upon the Ḥajj and his expenditure is pure and he places his foot in the stirrup and calls out, ‘*Labbayk Allāhumma labbayk* – at Your service, O Allah, at Your service,’ then a crier calls out to him from heaven, ‘At your service, time after time! Your provision is *ḥalāl* and your mount is *ḥalāl*, and your Ḥajj is rewarded and does not bear the burden of wrong action.’ When a man goes out and his expenditure is foul and he places his foot in the stirrup and cries, ‘*Labbayk*

Allāhumma labbayk – at Your service, O Allah, at Your service,' then a crier calls out to him from heaven, 'Not at your service! Your travelling provision is *ḥarām*, your expenditure is *ḥarām*, and your Ḥajj is not acceptable.'"[16] The like of this is narrated in a hadith of ʿUmar ﷺ but also with a weak chain of transmission.

Abū Yaḥyā al-Qattāt narrated from Mujāhid that Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "Allah will not accept the prayer of someone in whose belly there is something *ḥarām*."

The people of knowledge differ as to whether the person who performs Ḥajj with *ḥarām* wealth or prays in clothing which is *ḥarām* has discharged the obligation of the prayer and the Ḥajj by that. Two statements are narrated of Imam Aḥmad about it, and these aforementioned hadith show that action is not acceptable along with engagement in that which is *ḥarām*. However, acceptability can mean [Allah] being contented with the action, and praising the one who does the action, praising him among the angels and showing pride in him. It can also mean the attainment of reward and recompense for it. It can also mean the discharge of the obligation. If what is meant is acceptance with the first or the second meanings, that

does not prevent it being a discharge of the obligation. Just as it is narrated that the prayer of a runaway slave is not acceptable nor that of a wife with whom her husband is angry, nor the prayer of someone who goes to a fortune-teller, nor that of someone who drinks wine for forty days [i.e. not acceptable for forty days]. What is meant, and Allah knows best, is the lack of acceptance in the first and the second senses above; and it is what is meant, and Allah knows best, by His words ﷻ:

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

"Allah only accepts from people who have *taqwā*."[17] For this reason the fear that the right-acting first generations had for themselves from this *āyah* was very strong, for they were afraid that they were not of the people who have *taqwā* of Allah from whom Allah accepts [their actions].

Aḥmad was asked about the meaning of the muttaqūn "those who have *taqwā*" in it [this *āyah*], and he said, "They are wary [*yattaqī*] of things and so they do not fall into that which they are not permitted."

Abū ʿAbdullāh an-Nabājī az-Zāhid[18] ﷺ said, "There are five qualities with which action is made complete: *īmān* with gnosis (*maʿrifah*) of Allah ﷻ, recognition (*maʿrifah*) of the truth (al-Ḥaqq), doing actions purely for Allah, acting by the Sunnah, and eating that which is *ḥalāl*. If any one of them is missing then the action will not be raised up. That is because, when you have gnosis of Allah ﷻ but you do not recognise the truth then you will not benefit. If you recognise the truth, but you do not have gnosis of Allah, then you will not benefit. If you have gnosis of Allah and recognise the truth, but you are not sincere in your actions, then you will not benefit. If you have gnosis of Allah, recognise the truth and are sincere in your actions, but they are not based on the Sunnah, then you will not benefit. If all of these four are complete, but your food is not *ḥalāl*, you will not benefit."[19]

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said, "Even if you were to stand in the station of this party of people [who stand in prayer during the night], nothing would benefit you until you watch what goes into your stomach [to see] whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*."[20]

Giving *ṣadaqah* [i.e. *zakāh* or optional *ṣadaqah*] with *ḥarām* property is unacceptable as is reported in

Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The prayer is not accepted without purity nor *ṣadaqah* from [property acquired] dishonestly.”[21]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “No one gives *ṣadaqah* from pure earnings – and Allah only excepts that which is pure – but that the All-Merciful takes it in His right hand…”

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ there is from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “A slave [of Allah] who earns property which is *ḥarām* then spends out of it so he can have blessing in it; or gives *ṣadaqah*, so it can be accepted from him, or leaves it behind him, it will be his provision for the Fire. Allah does not efface evil with evil, but Allah effaces evil by good. That which is foul does not efface that which is foul.”[22]

It is narrated in a hadith of Darrāj from Ibn Ḥujayrah from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever earns *ḥarām* wealth and pays *ṣadaqah* from it, will have no reward from it and the responsibility of it is on him.” Ibn Ḥibbān narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.[23] Some others narrated it stopping short at Abū Hurayrah.

Of the *mursal* hadith of al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymirah, there is that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Whoever gains wealth from a criminal act and gives it as a gift to relatives, or pays *ṣadaqah* from it, or spends it in the way of Allah, then Allah will gather all of that and cast it with him into the Fire of Jahannam.”[24]

It is narrated of Abū’d-Dardā’ and Yazīd ibn Maysarah that they regarded whoever gains property in a *ḥarām* manner and then gives *ṣadaqah* from it to be just like someone who takes an orphan’s property and uses it to clothe widows.

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ was asked about someone who did some work in which he wronged [people] and took property which was *ḥarām*, then he turned penitently to Allah and performed the Ḥajj, gave *ṣadaqah* and freed slaves from it [that property]. He said, “Foul [wealth] does not expiate foul [actions].” Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said the same, “Foul [wealth] does not expiate foul [actions], but the pure expiates that which is foul.”[25] Al-Ḥasan said, “You who give *ṣadaqah* to the bereft person to show mercy to him, show mercy to the one you have wronged.”

Know that there are two facets to paying *ṣadaqah* with *ḥarām* wealth:

First, that the one who has acquired it deceitfully or by force, etc., pays it as *ṣadaqah* on behalf of himself, and this is what is meant in these hadith that it is not accepted from him, meaning that he is not rewarded for it, rather he is guilty of transacting with someone else's property without their permission. The [true] owner does not gain a reward because he had neither purpose nor intention. That is what a group of the people of knowledge say, one of whom is Ibn ʿAqīl of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs]. In the book of ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in the narration of Zayd ibn al-Akhnas al-Khuzāʿī there is that he asked Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab, "I found some lost property. Should I give it away as *ṣadaqah*?" He said, "Neither you nor its true owner would have a reward."[26] Perhaps what he meant was, "if he gives it away as *ṣadaqah* before the obligatory [effort of] making it publicly known." If the ruler or one of his deputies takes that which he has no right to take from the *bayt al-māl*[27] and gives *ṣadaqah* from it or frees slaves or builds a mosque with it, etc., or anything else which brings benefit to people, then what has been transmitted from Ibn ʿUmar is that he is like the person who wrongfully takes something by force when he gives *ṣadaqah* from what he has taken.

That was what he said to ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir, the amir of Baṣra, when people gathered around him at the time of his death praising him for his virtues and good treatment, while Ibn ʿUmar was silent. He [Ibn ʿĀmir] asked him to speak and so he narrated to him the hadith that, "*ṣadaqah* is not accepted from wrongfully acquired property," and said to him, "and you were in charge of Baṣra."[28]

Asad ibn Mūsā said in the *Kitāb al-waraʿ* (the Book of Scrupulousness), "Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ told us from Manṣūr that Tamīm ibn Maslamah said, "Ibn ʿĀmir said to ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar, 'What do you think of these mountain roads which we have made easy and these springs which we have made pour forth, do we have a reward for them?' Ibn ʿUmar said, 'Haven't you learnt that something foul never expiates something foul.'"

ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ziyād told us from Abū Malīḥ that Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, "Ibn ʿUmar said to Ibn ʿĀmir who had asked him about the freeing of slaves, 'You are like someone who stole the camel of someone performing the Ḥajj and then used it to go on *jihād* in the way of Allah. Do you think that it would be accepted from him?'"

A group of those who are extremely scrupulous such as Ṭāwus and Wuhayb ibn al-Ward used to be wary of benefiting from anything which kings had introduced. As for Imam Aḥmad ﷺ he granted concessions for those things of public utility which they did, such as mosques, canals and workshops, because these must be spent on from the *fay'*[29], O Allah, unless it is certain that they do any of that from *ḥarām* property such as customs duties and taxes, and from property which has been forcibly acquired and the like, for then one has to be wary of benefiting from work done with *ḥarām* wealth. Perhaps Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ only rejected their taking property for themselves from the *bayt al-māl* and then claiming that what they did with it after that was as acts of *ṣadaqah* from them personally, because this resembles taking others' property wrongfully by force, and it is in this way that one must interpret the position of those people of knowledge when they strenuously disapprove of kings' building mosques.

Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī said, "I saw one of the earlier [scholars] being asked whether those rulers and governors who earn both *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* [income] and then build *ribāṭ* fortresses [to guard the frontiers]

and mosques have a reward? He gave a *fatwā* which would gladden the heart of someone who spent [in such a fashion], saying that he has the position of a sort of middleman in his establishing *waqf* properties with that which he does not own, since he does not know the specific individuals from whom the property was forcibly taken and thus cannot return it to them." He said, "I said, 'How astonishing those people are who issue fatwās without knowing the principles of the *Sharīʿah*. One has to investigate the state of someone who spends [in this fashion] first of all. If it is the ruler, then the correct modes of expenditure of whatever comes out of the *bayt al-māl* are well known, so how can he prevent those who have a right to it [the funds from the *bayt al-māl*] and tie it up in that which has no benefit, such as in building schools or *ribāṭs*? If he is one of the governors or deputies of the ruler, he must return whatever ought to be returned to the *bayt al-māl*. If it is *ḥarām* or the results of forcible expropriation, then every act of spending from it is *ḥarām*, and it is obligatory to return it to whomever it was taken from or his heirs. If they are unknown, then it must be returned to the *bayt al-māl* and spent on public utilities or given as optional *ṣadaqah*. The one

who accepts it does not gain without being guilty of wrong action.'"

His words were only about rulers who were contemporary with him and who prevented those with a right to the *fay'* from getting their right, and instead spent from it on their own behalf, as if they were the rightful owners, by building such schools, *ribāṭs* and the like for which there may have been no need and which they ascribed to themselves, and they singled out some people to receive it as opposed to others. As for where a just leader gives people their dues from the *fay'* and then builds, on their behalf, mosques, schools, hospitals or the like, for which they have a need, then that is permissible. If one of those who took for himself from the *bayt al-māl* used what he took to build a building for which there was a need, in a siuation where it is permissible to build from the [money of] the *bayt al-māl*, but he ascribed it to himself; it may be resolved by the difference of view as to whether someone who forcibly takes property, and who returns the property as a *ṣadaqah* and a gift to the one from whom he took it, is absolved by that or not. All of this is when he builds according to the degree of need without extravagance or [needless]

ornamentation. ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ordered the repair of the mosque of Baṣra [to be paid for] from the *bayt al-māl*, and forbade them exceeding [repair of] that of it which was falling apart, and he said, "I don't find that there is any right to spend from Allah's property on building." It is narrated of him that he said, "The Muslims have no need for that which harms their *bayt al-māl*."

Know that some of the people of knowledge regard the transacting of an expropriator and those like him with others' property as something which depends on the permission of the real owner, and that if he authorises his transacting with it [after the event] then it is permissible. Some of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] narrate from Aḥmad that whoever pays his *zakāh* with property which has been forcibly taken from someone else and later the [real] owner authorises it, then it is permissible and he has discharged the *zakāh*. Similarly, Ibn Abī Mūsā narrated from Aḥmad that if someone frees someone else's slave on his own behalf undertaking surety for him from his own property and later the [real] owner [of the slave] permits it, that then it is acceptable and the freeing [of the slave] is carried out, but this contradicts Aḥmad's

explicit position. It has been said of the Ḥanafīs that if someone forcibly takes a sheep and butchers it for his *mutʿah* or *qirān* [Ḥajj] and later the [real] owner [of the sheep] allows it, that it is acceptable.

The second aspect of the transactions of an expropriator with the property of someone from whom he took it, is that he should give it away as *ṣadaqah* on behalf of its owner, if he is unable to return it to him or his heirs. This is permissible according to the majority of the people of knowledge, Mālik, Abū Ḥanīfah, Aḥmad and others. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said that az-Zuhrī, Mālik, ath-Thawrī, al-Awzāʿī and al-Layth took the position that someone who takes property from the spoils [without being allotted it] and then the army separate and he cannot rejoin them, that he must pay a fifth to the leader and give the rest away as *ṣadaqah*. That has been narrated from ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, Muʿāwiyah and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and it closely resembles the position of Ibn Masʿūd and Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ because they both held the view that he must give away property whose owner is unknown as *ṣadaqah*. He [Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr] said, “There is unanimous agreement that it is permissible to give away as *ṣadaqah* lost property which has been found, after one

has made it publicly known [that one has found it] but the owner has remained silent and that if he [the owner] then comes, he must be given the choice between the reward [of having given *ṣadaqah*] or restoration of the value of the property, and that it is similar in the case of forcible expropriation of property."

It has been narrated that Mālik ibn Dīnār said, "I asked ʿAṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ about someone who had *ḥarām* property whose owners he does not know and he wishes to acquit himself of responsibility for it. He said, 'Let him pay it as *ṣadaqah*, but I do not say that it compensates [for his wrong action].'" Mālik [ibn Dīnār] said, "This saying of ʿAṭā' is dearer to me than its weight in gold."

Sufyān said that someone who bought something that had been forcibly taken from some people should return it to them, and if he has no power over them to do that, he must give it all away as *ṣadaqah* and not take his capital sum [with which he bought it]. He took a similar position about someone who sold something to someone with whom transacting is disapproved because of the ambiguous nature of his wealth, that, "He must give the price of it away as

ṣadaqah." Ibn al-Mubārak disagreed and said, "He must give the profit [he made] in particular away as *ṣadaqah*." Aḥmad said, "He gives the profit away as *ṣadaqah*."

He spoke similarly about someone who inherited property from his father, and his father had sold to someone with whom it is disapproved to transact, saying, "He must give the amount of the profit away as *ṣadaqah* and retain the rest." The same is narrated of a group of the Companions, among whom are ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ and ʿAbdullāh ibn Yazīd al-Anṣārī ﷺ. The best known position of ash-Shāfiʿī ﷺ concerning *ḥarām* properties is that they should be kept and that *ṣadaqah* should not be given from them until it is clear who has a right to them.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ used to hold the view that whoever has *ḥarām* property whose owners he does not know, should destroy it and throw it in the sea and that he should not give it away as *ṣadaqah*. He said, "One can only draw closer to Allah with things which are good." The authentic position is that one should give it as *ṣadaqah* because destruction of property and waste are forbidden, and setting it aside permanently exposes it to destruction and to allowing tyrants to

gain control over it. Giving it away as *ṣadaqah* is not on behalf of the one who has acquired it[30] so that is should become [an act of] drawing nearer to Him with something foul; in fact it is only a *ṣadaqah* on behalf of the [real] owner so that the benefit of it will be there for him in the next life since it is impossible for him to benefit from it in the world.

His words, "and then he mentioned a dishevelled dusty man lengthening his journey and stretching out his hands to the sky, 'Lord, Lord!' and his food is *ḥarām*, his drink *ḥarām*, his clothing *ḥarām*, and he has been fed on the *ḥarām*, so how can he be answered?"

These are words in which he ﷺ indicated the courtesies of supplication and the causes which lead to its being answered and those which prevent its being answered. He mentioned four of those causes which require that the supplication is answered:

First, long travel, and travel itself requires that the supplication is answered, as in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Three supplications are answered, no doubt about it: the supplication of the wronged person, the supplication of the traveller, and the supplication of the father for his child." Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and at-Tirmidhī

narrated it, and [at-Tirmidhī] had, “the supplication of the father against his child.”[31]

Something similar is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ when he said, “Whenever travel is lengthened, it is more likely that the supplication will be answered, because it is the time when it is most likely that the person will be contrite because of [his] long separation from [his] homeland and suffering hardship; and contrition is one of the greatest reasons for supplication being answered.”

Second, is becoming unkempt with respect to one’s clothing and outward form, by being dishevelled and dusty, which is also one of the things which require that supplication is answered, as is narrated in the famous hadith from the Prophet ﷺ “Many a dishevelled dusty person who owns two worn-out old garments and who would be driven away from [people’s] doors, if he were to swear by Allah, He would fulfil it.”[32] When the Prophet ﷺ went out to perform the prayer for rain he went unkempt, in a state of abasement and humbling himself.[33] The nephew of Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh was imprisoned, and so [Muṭarrif] dressed in old worn-out clothing and took a staff in his hand. Someone said, “What is this?”

He said, “I am humbling myself to my Lord in order that He might accept me as an intercessor for my nephew.”[34]

Third, stretching out the hands towards the sky is one of the courtesies of supplication by which it is hoped that it will be answered. In the hadith of Salmān ﷺ there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Truly Allah, exalted is He, is modest and generous, and He is too shy when a man raises his two hands towards Him to reject them and return them empty and destitute.” Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated it.[35] A similar hadith is narrated from Anas, Jābir and others.

The Prophet ﷺ used to raise his hands in prayer for seeking rain until the whiteness of his armpits were seen,[36] and on the day of [the Battle of] Badr he raised his hands so much, seeking victory against the *mushrikūn*, that his outer wrap fell off his shoulders.[37]

Many different ways of raising the hands in supplication have been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ for example that he would point with his index finger alone, and it is narrated that he did that on the *minbar*[38] and when he mounted his riding beast.[39]

A body of the people of knowledge take the position that in the supplication of *qunūt*, which is done within the prayer, that one should point with one's finger, for example, al-Awzāʿī, Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh. Ibn ʿAbbās and others said, "This is pure sincerity in supplication."[40] Ibn Sīrīn said, "When you have praised Allah, then point with one finger."

Another example is that he ﷺ raised his hands so that the backs of them were in the direction of the *qiblah* while he was facing it, and the palms were towards his face. This manner of doing it has been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ in the supplication for seeking rain.[41] Some, for example al-Jawzajānī, regard raising the hands in the prayer for seeking rain in this manner as being recommended.

One of the right-acting first generations said, "Raising [the hands] in this manner is to humble oneself."

Another example is the opposite of that and has also been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ in the prayer for seeking rain.[42] It is narrated of a group of the right-acting first generations that they used to supplicate like that. Some of them, of whom were Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn

ʿAbbās and Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with them, said, “Raising [the hands] in this manner is seeking protection and refuge with Allah.” It is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that when he sought refuge he would raise his hands in this manner.[43]

Another example is that he raised his hands with the palms towards the sky and the backs of the hands to the earth. The command for that has been transmitted concerning asking Allah ﷻ in more than one hadith. From Ibn ʿUmar, Abū Hurayrah and Ibn Sīrīn there is that, “This *is* supplication and asking Allah ﷻ.”

There are examples which are the opposite of that, i.e. turning the palms down and the backs of the hands towards the sky and the palms towards the ground. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Anas that, “The Prophet ﷺ did the prayer of seeking rain and directed the backs of his hands towards the sky.” Imam Aḥmad ؒ also narrated it and in his wording there is, “So he spread out his hands and made the backs of them upwards towards the sky.” Abū Dāwūd also narrated it and his wording is, “He did the prayer for seeking rain like this – meaning the Prophet ﷺ – extending his two hands making their palms towards the ground.”[44]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith that Abū Saʿīd al-Khudri ﷺ said, “The Prophet ﷺ was standing on ʿArafah supplicating like this,” and he raised his hands in front of his breast making the inner part of the palms towards the ground. Ḥammād ibn Salamah described the Prophet ﷺ similarly, raising his hands on ʿArafah. It is narrated from Ibn Sīrīn that this is seeking refuge. AlḤumaydī said, “This is earnest sincere prayer and self-abasement.”

Fourth, to importune Allah ﷻ by repeatedly mentioning His Lordship, and it is one of the greatest ways of seeking an answer to prayer. Al-Bazzār related a hadith of ʿĀ’ishah, the Umm al-Mu’minīn, which she ascribed [to the Prophet ﷺ], “When the slave says ‘O Lord,’ four times, Allah says, ‘At your service, My slave. Ask and you will be given.’”[45]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated in a hadith of Saʿd ibn Khārijah that, “Some people complained to the Prophet ﷺ because the rain was withheld, and so he said, ‘Fall upon your knees and say, “O Lord! O Lord!”’ and he raised his index finger to the sky. They were given so much water that they wished it would be stopped.”[46]

In the *Musnad* and elsewhere there is from al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “The prayer is two by two; and saying the *tashahhud* in every two *rakʿahs*, humbling yourself and being submissive and appearing as someone who is destitute; and you beg with your two hands,” he said, “you raise them to your Lord with them towards your face saying, ‘O Lord! O Lord!’ Whoever does not do that, then it [the prayer] is incomplete or deficient.”[47]

Yazīd ar-Raqāshī said that Anas said, “No slave says, ‘O Lord, O Lord, O Lord,’ but that his Lord says to him, ‘At your service. At your service.’” It is narrated from Abū’d-Dardā’ and Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that they used to say, “The greatest name of Allah is ‘My Lord, my Lord.’”[48]

ʿAṭā’ said, “If the slave says, ‘O Lord, O Lord,’ three times Allah glances at him,” and that was mentioned to al-Ḥasan and he said, “Do you not recite the Qur’ān?” Then he recited His words, exalted is He:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَاماً وَقُعُوداً وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذا بَاطِلاً سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ
أَخْزَيْتَهُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ رَّبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِياً يُنَادِي لِلإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمْ
فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الأَبْرَارِ رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا
عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلاَ تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لاَ تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لاَ
أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنكُم

"...those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: 'Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, those You cast into the Fire, You have indeed disgraced. The wrongdoers will have no helpers. Our Lord, we heard a caller calling us to *īmān*: "Have *īmān* in your Lord!" and we had *īmān*. Our Lord, forgive us our wrong actions, erase our bad actions from us and take us back to You with those who are truly good. Our Lord, give us what You promised us through Your Messengers, and do not disgrace us on the Day of Rising. You do not break Your promise.' Their Lord

responds to them: ‘I will not let the deeds of any doer among you go to waste.’[49]”[50]

Whoever considers the supplications mentioned in the Qur’ān, will find that in the great majority of cases they begin with the name “Lord” such as in His words, exalted is He:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“Our Lord, give us good in the *dunyā*, and good in the *ākhirah*, and safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire.”[51]

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلاَ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْراً كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلاَ تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لاَ طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ

“Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake! Our Lord, do not place on us a load like the one You placed on those before us! Our Lord, do not place on us a load we have not the strength to bear!”[52] And His words, exalted is He:

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

“Our Lord, do not make our hearts swerve aside after You have guided us.”[53] There are many more examples like this in the Qur’ān.

Mālik and Sufyān were asked about someone saying in his supplication, “Yā *Sayyidī* – O my Master,” and they said, “Let him say, ‘*Yā Rabb* – O my Lord.’” Mālik said in addition, “As the prophets said in their supplications.”

As for that which prevents supplication being answered, he ﷺ indicated that it was ample amounts of *ḥarām* food, drink, clothing and nourishment. We have previously seen the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ with this same meaning, and that the Prophet ﷺ said to Saʿd, “Make your food pure and your supplications will be answered.” So eating that which is *ḥalāl*, drinking it, dressing in that which is *ḥalāl* and nourishing oneself with it is a means which requires that one’s supplications will be answered. ʿIkrimah ibn ʿAmmār narrated, “Al-Asfar told us, saying, ‘Someone said to Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, “[How is that] your supplication among all the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is answered?” He said, “When I raise a morsel to my mouth, I know where it came from and what it came out of.”’”

Wahb ibn Munabbih said, “Whoever wishes Allah to answer his supplication, then let him make [sure] his food is pure.” Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh said, “Whoever eats *ḥalāl* food for forty mornings, will have his supplications answered.” Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said, “It has reached us that the slave’s supplication is barred from the heavens because of bad food.”

His words ﷺ, “So how can that be answered?” is a form of enquiry expressing astonishment and that it is improbable, but it is not a clear declaration of the impossibility of an answer or its being entirely precluded. Therefore, we derive from this that ample consumption of the *ḥarām* and being nourished by it is one of the complex of things that prevent the answer [to the supplication], but there may also exist things which prevent these preventative matters from blocking [the supplication], and it may also be that committing these *ḥarām* acts may prevent supplications being answered as may also giving up duties, as it is narrated in the hadith, that, giving up commanding the well-recognised virtues and forbidding the reprehensible vices prevents the supplication of the best people being answered, and that doing acts of obedience causes the supplication to

be answered. For that reason the ones who entered the cave and the stone fitted in place over them, when they sought the mediation of their right actions, which they had done purely for the sake of Allah, exalted is He, and asked Allah by them, their supplications were answered.[54]

Wahb ibn Munabbih said, “The simile of someone who supplicates without doing any action is like someone who shoots an arrow without a string [in his bow].”[55] He also said, “Right action conveys the supplication.” Then he recited:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

“Good speech rises to Him and right action raises it up.”[56]

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ said, “By [one’s] scrupulous avoidance of that which Allah forbids, Allah accepts supplications and glorifications.”

Abū Dharr ﷺ said, “That [amount of] supplication is sufficient, along with good behaviour, which is similar to the amount of salt needed in food.”

Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ said, “A little supplication is sufficient along with scrupulousness.” Someone said to

Sufyān, “If only you would supplicate Allah.” He said, “Leaving wrong actions *is* supplication.”

Layth said, “Mūsā, upon whom be blessings and peace, saw a man raising his hands while he was exerting himself in asking Allah. Mūsā عليه السلام said, ‘O my Lord, Your slave supplicates you in order for You to show him mercy, and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. What have You done for his need?’ So He said, ‘Mūsā, even if he were to raise his hands until he expired, I would not look into his needs, until he looks into My rights.’”

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith with a weak chain of narration with the same meaning from Ibn ʿAbbās as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

Mālik ibn Dīnār said, “A trial struck Banī Isrā’īl, so they went out, and then Allah, exalted is He, revealed to His prophet to tell them, ‘You go out to the uplands with filthy bodies and you raise palms towards Me with which you have spilled blood and with which you have filled your houses full of forbidden things. At this time My anger is severe against you, and you will only become more distant from Me.’”

One of the right-acting first generations said, “Do not think that the answer is slow in coming when you

have blocked its paths with acts of disobedience." One of the poets took hold of this meaning when he said:

> We call on God for every distress
> then forget Him when distress is removed.
> How can we hope for an answer to a prayer
> whose path we have blocked with wrong
> actions?

1 Sūrat al-Mu'minūn: 51

2 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 171

3 i.e. that there is some weakness in it.

4 Sūrat an-Nūr: 25

5 Al-Bukhārī (1410) and Muslim (1014)

6 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 100

7 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 26

8 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 28

9 Sūrah Fāṭir: 10

10 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 157

11 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 32

12 Aḥmad (2:3326), at-Tirmidhī (2008) and Ibn Mājah (1443)

13 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 168

14 Ibn Kathīr menions in his *tafsīr*, that Ibn Mardawayh narrated this hadith in his *tafsīr* from aṭ-Ṭabarānī.

15 Aḥmad (2:98)

16 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

17 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 27

18 *Zāhid*: one who does in the world.

19 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

20 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

21 Muslim (224)

22 Aḥmad (1:378)

23 Ibn Ḥibbān (3367)

24 Adh-Dhahabī mentions it in his *Siyar* under the biography of al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymirah. Abū Dāwūd in his *Marāsīl*.

25 Al-Bazzār (932)

26 *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (18622)

27 *Bayt al-māl* is the public treasury of the Muslims. Ed.

28 Muslim (224)

29 *Fay'* are spoils acquired in *jihād* without fighting, which are entirely for the rulers to dispose of. Trans.

30 i.e. the expropriator, the cheater or the one who somehow became the recipient of it.

31 Abū Dāwūd (1536), Ibn Mājah (3862), at-Tirmidhī (1905, 3448)

32 Muslim (2622)

33 At-Tirmidhī (558-9), an-Nasā'ī (3:163), Abū Dāwūd (1165), and Ibn Mājah (1266), Aḥmad (1:230)

34 Ibn ʿAsākir in his *Tārīkh* and adh-Dhahabī in his *Siyar* (4:195)

35 At-Tirmidhī (3556), Abū Dāwūd (1488), Ibn Mājah (3865)

36 Al-Bukhārī (1031), Muslim (895)

37 Muslim (1763) in a long hadith

38 Muslim (874)

39 Muslim (1218)

40 Ibn Abī Shaybah (10:287)

41 Al-Bukhārī (1031) and Muslim (895)

42 Abū Dāwūd (1171)

43 Aḥmad (4:56)

44 Abū Dāwūd (1171)

45 Al-Bazzār (3145)

46 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (5981). Al-Bazzār also narrated it (665)

47 Aḥmad (1:211), at-Tirmidhī (385)

48 Ibn Abī Shaybah (10:272)

49 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 191-5

50 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:313)

51 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 201

52 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 286

53 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 8

54 This is referring to the story of three people trapped in a cave narrated by al-Bukhārī (2210)

55 Ibn al-Mubārak narrated this in *az-Zuhd* (322)

56 Sūrah Fāṭir: 10.

الحديث الحادِيْ عَشَر

عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ سِبْطِ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ وَرَيْحَانَتِه ﷺ قَالَ: حَفِظْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿دَعْ مَا يَرِيبُكَ إِلَى مَا لاَ يَرِيبُكَ﴾. رَوَاهُ النَّسائِيُّ، وَ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَقَالَ: حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ.

Doubt

Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ the grandchild of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his descendant[1] said, "I memorised from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ 'Leave that which causes you doubt for that which causes you no doubt'." An-Nasā'ī (5711) and at-Tirmidhī (2518) narrated it and at-Tirmidhī said, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith."

Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated this hadith, and al-Ḥākim, from a hadith of Burayd ibn Abī Maryam from Abū'lḤawrā' from al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī. At-Tirmidhī declared that it is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Most people say that the name of Abū'l-Ḥawrā' as-Saʿdī is Rabīʿah ibn Shaybān. An-Nasā'ī and Ibn Ḥibbān said that he was trustworthy. Aḥmad hesitated

in giving the name of Abū'l-Ḥawrā' as Rabīʿah ibn Shaybān and inclined to regard them as two different people. Al-Jawzajānī said, "Abū'l-Ḥawrā' is unknown and unrecognised."

This is part of a long hadith in which is mentioned the *qunūt* [supplication] of the *witr* prayer. At-Tirmidhī and others have some extra words to this hadith which are, "For truthfulness is tranquillity and lying is doubt." The wording of Ibn Ḥibbān is, "Good is tranquillity and evil is doubt."

Imam Aḥmad narrated it with a chain of transmission in which there is an unknown person narrating from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Leave that which gives you doubt for what gives you no doubt,"[2] and he narrated it in another way which is better than this but stopping short at Anas.[3]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it from a narration of Mālik from Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith. Ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "This is only narrated as a saying of Ibn ʿUmar and from ʿUmar. It is narrated from Mālik as his saying."

It is narrated with a weak chain of transmission from ʿUthmān ibn ʿAṭā' alKhurasānī, and he is weak, from his father from al-Ḥasan from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said to a man, "Leave that which gives

you doubt for what gives you no doubt." He said, "How am I to know that?" He said, "When you mean to do something then place your hand on your breast because the heart becomes agitated by what is forbidden, and becomes still because of what is permitted. The scrupulous Muslim gives up small things for fear of what is larger." It has also been narrated from ʿAṭāʾ al-Khurasānī as a *mursal* hadith.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī[4] narrated the like of it with a weak chain of transmission from Wāthilah ibn al-Asqaʿ from the Prophet ﷺ and he added, "Someone asked him, 'Who is the scrupulous one?' He answered, 'The one who hesitates when there is ambiguity.'" These words have been narrated as the words of a large group of the Companions, among whom are ʿUmar, Ibn ʿUmar and Abūʾd-Dardāʾ. Ibn Masʿūd said, "If you intend to do something which causes you doubt, around you there are four thousand [things] which cause you no doubt." ʿUmar said, "Give up usury and doubt," meaning [give up] that about which you have doubt even if you do not know for sure that it is usury.

The meaning of this hadith refers to hesitating over ambiguity and protecting oneself against it, because no doubt occurs to the *muʾmin* in his heart because of

what is wholly *ḥalāl* – and doubt means unrest, disquiet and agitation – rather the self is at rest with it and the heart tranquil. As for ambiguities, hearts become disquieted and agitated by them and that creates doubt.

Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-ʿUmarī az-Zāhid said, "If a slave is scrupulous he will leave that which gives him doubt in favour of that which does not give him doubt."

Al-Fuḍayl said, "People claim that scrupulousness is difficult. Whenever two matters are presented to me, I always choose the more difficult of them; so leave what gives you doubt for that which gives you no doubt."

Ḥassān ibn Abī Sinān said, "There is nothing simpler and easier than scrupulousness: if anything causes you doubt, give it up." This is only easy for someone the like of Ḥassān ﷺ.

Ibn al-Mubārak said, "A servant of Ḥassān ibn Abī Sinān wrote to him from Aḥwāz, 'Damage has struck the sugar cane [crop], so buy sugar where you are.' So he bought it from a man, but it was only a little later that he found there was a profit of thirty thousand on what he had bought [because the shortage of sugar

inflated the prices].” He said, “He went back to the [original] owner of the sugar and said, ‘So-and-so, my servant had written to me and I did not tell you [that the Aḥwāz sugar harvest was destroyed], so annul that which I bought from you.’ The other said to him, ‘You have now told me, and I am pleased with it for you.’” He said, “He returned but his heart would not endure it, and so he went back to him and said, ‘So-and-so, I did not approach this matter correctly, so I want you to revoke the sale.’” He said, “He kept at it until he returned it to him.”

When Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd sought goods and they were in brisk demand, and he sent someone to buy them for him, then he would say to the one who bought on his behalf, “Tell whoever you buy from that the goods are in demand.”

Hishām ibn Ḥassān said, “Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn abandoned 40,000 because of things in which you would see no harm today.”

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Dīnār had sent food to Baṣra with a man and told him to sell it on the day he entered for the price [at which it was being sold in the market] that day. Later his letter came to him, “I came to Baṣra and found that food was not in great demand and so I

stored it. Then food went up [in price] and I gained such-and-such for it." Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to him, "You have betrayed me, and have done the opposite of what I told you. When my letter comes to you, give the entire value of the food away to the poor people of Baṣra. I hope I will be safe if you do that."

Yazīd ibn Zurayᶜ refused five hundred thousand from the inheritance of his father and would not accept it. His father used to manage work for the rulers. Yazīd used to weave [the fibres of] date-palm leaves, and earned his nourishment from that until he died ﵀.

Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah had stored up a great quantity of food. Then he saw a cloud during the autumn and disliked it.[5] He said, "Do I see myself disliking what is of benefit to the Muslims?" He swore that he would not take any profit from it [the sale of the stored food], and told ᶜUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﵁ about that. ᶜUmar said to him, "May Allah reward you with better."

From this we see that the one who hoards [food] ought to renounce the profit on what he hoards in a way that is prohibited. Imam Aḥmad ﵀ stipulated that one should shun the profit of what has not entered

into one's responsibility[6] because it would enter into [the category of] "profiting from what one has not become responsible for" and the Prophet ﷺ forbade it.[7]

Aḥmad said, in one narration from him, that someone who rented out for a profit, something which he himself rented, must give the profit away as *ṣadaqah*. He said, in a narration from him, concerning the profit on goods of a *muḍārabah* transaction[8] in which the agent had gone against the wishes of the investor that he [the agent] must give the profit away as *ṣadaqah*. He said, in a narration from him, concerning someone who bought fruits [on the trees] before they ripened with the condition that they will be cut down [immediately], and then left them until they ripened, "He should give the extra as *ṣadaqah*." A party of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] interpret it as meaning that it is recommended, because to give things which are ambiguous as *ṣadaqah* is recommended.

It is narrated from ʿĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها that she was asked about the person who is in *iḥrām* [for the Ḥajj] eating the [meat of a] hunted animal and she said, "They [the days of the Ḥajj] are only a few days, so whatever

gives you doubt, leave it." Meaning, that whatever is ambiguous to you as to whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, then give it up, because people differ concerning the permissibility of the person in *iḥrām* eating [the meat of] the animal which has been caught by hunting in the case where he has not himself hunted it.

A proof is derived from this that avoiding the disagreement of the people of knowledge [by avoiding the matter which has thus been rendered ambiguous or acting according to the most cautious of the two opinions where are regarded as permissible] is better, because it is further away from ambiguity. However, thorough people of knowledge from our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] and others take the position that this is not an unconditional statement, because in some matters on which there is disagreement there are clear concessions narrated from the Prophet ﷺ and to which there is no opposing evidence; to follow those concessions is more fitting than avoiding them, even if those concessions did not reach a particular person of knowledge so that they abstained from them [those concessions] because of that. This is like someone who is sure that he has performed *wuḍū*' but is unsure as to whether he [subsequently] broke it, because it is

narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Let him not break off [his prayer] until he hears a noise [of his breaking wind] or smells an odour.”[9] Particularly if his doubt occurred during the prayer, he is not permitted to interrupt it because it is authentically narrated that it is prohibited to do so, even though some of the people of knowledge regard it as obligatory to do so.

If the concession has things which contradict it – another Sunnah or the Muslim community’s practising something which differs from it – then it is better to give up practising it [the concession]. Similarly, if minority groups of people had practised [the concession], but it is more generally accepted among the community in the great cities of the Muslims from the time of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, that the practice is something else, then it is specifically recommended to adopt the practice of the Muslims, because Allah has protected this community from its false people dominating its true people. That practice which was dominant in the first three preferred generations is true, and everything contrary to it is false.

Here there is a matter that ought to be understood, which is that minute investigation of ambiguities is

only fitting for someone whose states are all exemplary and whose actions are consistent with fear of Allah and scrupulousness. As for someone who falls into violating clear obvious prohibitions and then wants to be scrupulous about minute ambiguities, he may not do that and it is repudiated if he does do it. As Ibn ʿUmar said to the Iraqi who asked him about the blood of a mosquito, "They ask me about the blood of a mosquito and they killed Ḥusayn. I heard the Prophet ﷺ say, 'They [Ḥasan and Ḥusayn] are my two descendants[10] in the world.'"[11]

A man asked Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith about a married man whose mother told him to divorce his wife. He said, "If he treats his mother very well in every other thing and nothing remains but to divorce his wife, let him do it. If his good treatment of her extends to actually divorcing his wife, and then he goes to his mother afterwards and hits her, let him not do it."

Imam Aḥmad was asked about a man who bought greens and stipulated the date-palm fibre, meaning that which is used to tie the bunch of greens, and Aḥmad said, "What are these questions [that you ask me]?" Someone said to him, "Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Nuʿaym does that." Aḥmad said, "If it was Ibrāhīm ibn Abī

Nuʿaym, then how excellent this is; it resembles him!”[12]

He only disapproved of these questions being asked by those whose states do not resemble his [Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Nuʿaym]. As for those who are worthy of inquiring into the finer points of scrupulousness, their states resemble this. Imam Aḥmad himself used to employ this scrupulousness, because he told the one who bought fat for him, bringing it for him on a sheet of paper, to return the paper to the seller. Imam Aḥmad would not take ink from his companions’ inkwells, but would take his own inkwell to take ink from. A man asked his permission to write from his inkwell and he said to him, “Write! For this scrupulousness is misplaced.” Another man asked his permission for that and he smiled and said, “My scrupulousness and your scrupulousness have not reached to this [degree].”[13] He said this by way of humility, and otherwise he himself employed this [level of] scrupulousness, but he disapproved of it in those who had not reached this station and who on the contrary would be lenient about matters which are clearly disapproved and undertake ambiguous matters without hesitation.

His words ﷺ “For good is tranquillity and evil is doubt,” meaning that hearts are at rest with good and become doubtful because of evil and are not at rest. In this there is an indication that one has to refer to the heart in cases of ambiguity, and there will be some more discussion of this matter in the hadith[14] of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān, if Allah wills, exalted is He.

Ibn Jarīr narrated with his chain of transmission from Qatādah from Bashīr ibn Kaʿb that he recited this *āyah*:

فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا

“So walk in its [the earth’s] *manākib*.”[15] Then he said to his slave-girl, “If you know what its *manākib* are, then you are free for the sake of the Face of Allah.” She said, “Its *manākib* are its mountains,” and it was as if he was struck in the face, and he desired his slave-girl, so he asked others. Some of them ordered him [to keep his slave-girl] and some forbade him. Then he asked Abū’d-Dardā’ and he said, “Good is tranquillity and evil is doubt, so give up what causes you doubt in favour of what causes you no doubt.”[16]

His words in the other narration, “Truthfulness is tranquillity and lying is doubt,” indicate that one ought not to rely on every single person’s words, as he said in the hadith of Wābiṣah, “Even if people repeatedly give you *fatwās*,” but that one should only rely on the words of those who tell the truth. The sign of truthfulness is that the hearts become at rest because of it, and the sign of lies is that they cause doubt and hearts do not become at rest and indeed they are averse to it.

It is from this standpoint that when the people of intellect, at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, heard his words and what he was calling them to, they knew that he was truthful and that he had come with the truth. When they heard the words of Musaylimah they recognised that he was a liar, and that he had brought falsehood. It is narrated that before ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ accepted Islam, he heard him [Musaylimah] claiming that the following was revealed to him, “O daman, O daman[17], you have two ears and a breast! And you know, ʿAmr [ibn al-ʿĀṣ]!” So he said, “By Allah, I know that you lie!”

One of the people of the early generations said, “Picture to yourself whatever you wish in your heart and think about it, then measure it against its opposite. If you weigh them both up, you will recognise what is true from what is false, and truthfulness from lying.” He said, “It is like when you picture Muḥammad ﷺ and then you reflect on what of the Qur’ān he brought and you recite:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنفَعُ النَّاسَ

‘In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and day, and the ships which sail the seas to people’s benefit,’[18] and then you picture to yourself the opposite of Muḥammad ﷺ and you find him to be Musaylimah and you reflect on what he brought and you read, ‘O mistress of the bedchamber, the bed is ready for you,’ meaning his words to Sajjāḥ when he married her.” He said, “Then you will see that this – meaning the Qur’ān – is unshakeable, wonderful and that it clings to the heart and is beautiful to the hearing, and you will see that that they – meaning Musaylimah’s words – are cold, meagre and indecent. You will know that Muḥammad

is true and that he brought revelation, and that Musaylimah is a liar and he brought falsehood."

1 *Rayḥānah* means literally "sweet-smelling basil" but is used for mercy, provision and rest, and also for children and offspring. Trans.

2 Aḥmad (3:153)

3 Aḥmad (3:112)

4 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr*

5 Because rain would mean good crops and hence less demand for his stored food.

6 Meaning that if that product perished, it would be one's own loss and not someone else's. However, if that product is still someone else's responsibility, regardless of whose possession it is in, then one cannot make a profit on it. This is something that is very common in the modern day. For example, A orders 100 mobile phones from B, then while those phones are still the responsibility of B (in the sense that if they were damaged or stolen B would be responsible for them), A sells them to C and makes a profit. That profit is not *ḥalāl*. Ed.

7 Abū Dāwūd (3504)

8 *Muḍārabah* transactions are profit-and loss-sharing transactions in trade in which one party provides the capital and the other party the labour as an agent and the profits are shared as previously agreed between both parties. Trans.

9 Al-Bukhārī (137), Muslim (361)

10 See previous note on *rayḥānah*. Trans.

11 Al-Bukhārī (3753)

12 Meaning if someone like him does this then it is good and its suits him, but it is not for everyone to be like that.

13 i.e. “to the degree that you cannot use my ink”. So Imam Aḥmad was applying the highest standard of scrupulousness to himself but not expecting that of others. Ed.

14 Hadith number 27.

15 Sūrat al-Mulk: 15

16 Ibn Jarīr narrated it in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (29:7)

17 *Wabr: hyrax syriacus*, cony or daman, a small desert animal like a weasel. Trans.

18 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 164

الحديث الثاني عشر

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لا يَعْنِيهِ﴾.

حديثٌ حَسَنٌ. رَواهُ الترمذيُّ وَغَيْرُه.

What Does Not Concern One

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'A part of the excellence of a man's Islam is his leaving alone what does not concern him'." At-Tirmidhī (2317) and others relate it like this.

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrate this hadith in the version of al-Awzāʿī from Qurrah ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān from az-Zuhrī from Abū Salamah from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ. At-Tirmidhī said that it is unusual,[1] but the Shaykh [an-Nawawī] ﷺ the compiler [of *The Forty Hadith*] regarded it as good because all of the men in the chain of transmission were trustworthy. Some people regarded Qurrah ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ḥaywīl as trustworthy but some others regarded him as weak. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, "This hadith is

memorised from az-Zuhrī with this chain of transmission from the narration of trustworthy people," which accords with the Shaykh's estimation of it as good. However, most of the leading scholars said that it is not memorised with this chain of transmission. It is memorised from az-Zuhrī from ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn from the Prophet ﷺ as a *mursal* hadith. That is how the trustworthy [men of knowledge] transmitted it from az-Zuhrī, of whom are Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'*, Yūnus, Maʿmar and Ibrāhīm ibn Saʿd except that he said, "A part of a man's *īmān* is his leaving alone what does not concern him." Among those who say that it is not authentic from anyone other than ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn as a *mursal* hadith were Imam Aḥmad, Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn, al-Bukhārī and ad-Dāraquṭnī, but he mixed up weak narrators in its chain of transmission from az-Zuhrī in a terrible way. What is authentic is that it is a *mursal* hadith. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar al-ʿUmarī narrated it from az-Zuhrī from ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn from his father [al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī] from the Prophet ﷺ and so he connected it back directly [to the Prophet ﷺ by naming the Companion who first transmitted it] and he regarded it as transmitted by al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī. Imam Aḥmad transmitted it in his *Musnad* in this

way, but al-ʿUmarī was not one who memorised [hadith]. He also narrated it in another way from al-Ḥusayn from the Prophet ﷺ but al-Bukhārī declared it, as transmitted in this form, to be weak in his *Tārīkh* (History) and said, "It is not authentic except from ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn as a *mursal* hadith." It is narrated in other ways from the Prophet ﷺ but all of them are weak.

This hadith is one of the great principles of courtesy [*adab*]. Imam Abū ʿAmr ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ related from Abū Muḥammad ibn Abī Zayd [al-Qayrawānī], who was the Imam of the Mālikīs in his time, that he said, "That which gathers together all good courtesies and binds and makes them fast, branches out from four hadith: the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day let him speak well or be silent..." and his saying ﷺ, "A part of the excellence of a man's Islam is his leaving alone that which does not concern him," and his saying ﷺ to someone who asked him to give him brief and concise advice, "Do not become angry," and his saying ﷺ, "The believer loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

The meaning of this hadith is that whoever makes good his Islam gives up whatever words or deeds do

not concern him and confines himself to those words and deeds which do concern him. The meaning of "concerns him" is that his concern connects itself to it and it becomes a part of his purpose and that which he seeks. "Concern" means to attach great importance to or be worried about something. One uses the word to signify when one attaches importance to something and seeks it. It does not mean that one abandons that for which one has no concern or will because of the rule of one's opinion or the desire of one's self, but rather because of the judgement of the *Sharīʿah* and Islam. It is for that reason that he made it a part of the excellence of Islam. When a man makes good his Islam, then he gives up the words and deeds which in respect of Islam do not concern him, because Islam requires the performance of the obligatory duties as previously mentioned in explanation of the hadith of Jibrīl ﷺ and the praiseworthy and complete Islam comprises relinquishing those things which are forbidden, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Muslim is the one from whose hand and tongue the Muslims are safe." When one makes good one's Islam it requires giving up everything that does not concern one of forbidden things, ambiguities, matters which are

disapproved and the excess of those things which are permissible for which one has no need. All of these things 'do not concern' the Muslim when his Islam is complete and when he has reached the station of *iḥsān*, which is that he worships Allah, exalted is He, as if he sees Him, for if he does not see Him, then Allah sees him. Whoever worships Allah conscious of His nearness and witnessing Him with his heart[2] or aware of Allah's nearness to him and of His watching over him,[3] then he has made good his Islam. Therefore he must give up everything in Islam which does not concern him and occupy himself in it with that which does concern him, because from these two stations modesty before Allah is produced and the abandonment of everything for which one should be ashamed, as he ﷺ advised a man to be ashamed before Allah as he would be ashamed before a right-acting man from among his close relatives who never separated from him. There is in the *Musnad* and in at-Tirmidhī from Ibn Masʿūd رضي الله عنه as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Modesty before Allah is that you guard the head and what it contains, and guard the belly and what it encloses and that you remember death and decomposition. Whoever does that is modest before

Allah with true modesty."[4] One of them said, "Be modest before Allah according to the measure of His nearness to you and fear Allah according to the measure of His power over you."

One of the gnostics said, "When you speak then remember that Allah is listening to you. When you are silent then remember that He is gazing at you." Indications of this meaning occur in many places in the Tremendous Qur'ān, such as in His words, exalted is He:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ مَا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

"We created man and We know what his own self whispers to him. We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. And the two recording angels are recording, sitting on the right and on the left. He does not utter a single word, without a watcher by him."[5] And His words, exalted is He:

وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُو مِنْهُ مِن قُرْآنٍ وَلاَ تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلاَّ كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُوداً إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الأَرْضِ وَلاَ فِي السَّمَاء وَلاَ أَصْغَرَ مِن ذَلِكَ وَلا أَكْبَرَ إِلاَّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

“You do not engage in any matter or recite any of the Qur’ān or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are engrossed in it. Not even the smallest mote eludes your Lord, either in the earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book.”[6] And He said, exalted is He:

أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُم بَلَى وَرُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ

“Or do they imagine that We do not hear their secrets and their private talk? On the contrary Our messengers are right there with them writing it down!”[7] Most of what is intended concerning giving up what does not concern one refers to guarding the tongue from useless talk as is indicated in the first *āyah* from Sūrah Qāf mentioned above.

In the *Musnad* there is a hadith of al-Ḥusayn from the Prophet ﷺ in which he said, “It is of the excellence of a man’s Islam to speak little about what does not concern one.”[8]

Al-Kharā’iṭī narrated from a hadith of Ibn Masʿūd رضي الله عنه that he said, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, I am someone who is obeyed by his people, so what should I tell them to do?’ He

said to him, ‘Tell them to spread [the greeting of] peace and to speak little except about that which concerns them.’”[9]

From the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān there is from Abū Dharr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “In the scripture of Ibrāhīm, upon whom be blessings and peace, there was, ‘The intelligent person, as long as his intellect is not overcome, should have [some] hours: an hour in which he holds intimate discourse with his Lord, an hour in which he takes himself to account, an hour in which he reflects on the workmanship of Allah, exalted is He, and an hour in which he should attend to his need of food and drink. The intelligent person should only journey for three reasons: taking provision for the Final Abode or to improve his livelihood, or for some permissible pleasure. The intelligent person should have some insight into his age; he should get on with his business and guard his tongue, and whoever reckons his words to be a part of his action will speak little except on what concerns him.”[10]

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ﷺ said, “Whoever reckons his words to be a part of his action will speak little except on what concerns him.” It is as he said, because many people do not reckon their words to be a part of

their action and so put themselves at risk and are not careful. This was not immediately obvious to Muʿādh ibn Jabal ﷺ so much so that he asked the Prophet ﷺ saying, “Shall we be taken to account for what we say?” He said, “May your mother be bereft of you, Muʿādh! Does anything prostrate people on their nostrils into the Fire except the harvests of their tongues?”[11]

Allah denies that there is any good in much of what people say in confidence to each other when He says:

لَّا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

“There is no good in much of their secret talk – except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people.”[12]

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah both narrated a hadith of Umm Ḥabībah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Every word of the son of Ādam is against him and not in his favour, except commanding the well-recognised virtues and forbidding the well-known wrong actions, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ.”[13] Some people expressed astonishment at this hadith in the presence

of Sufyān ath-Thawrī, so Sufyān said, “Why do you show astonishment at this? Does not Allah, exalted is He, say, ‘There is no good in much of their secret talk – except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people’? Does He not say, exalted is He:

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

‘On the Day when the Spirit and the angels stand in ranks, they will not speak, except for him who is authorised by the All Merciful and says what is right’[14]?” At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Anas ﷺ that he said, “One of his companions died – meaning of the Prophet ﷺ – and a man said, ‘Rejoice in the good news of the Garden!’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘You do not know, for perhaps he spoke about what did not concern him or was mean with what did not make him any wealthier.’”[15] The meaning of this hadith has been narrated in many ways from the Prophet ﷺ in some of which there is that the man was killed as a martyr (*shahīd*).

Abū’l-Qāsim al-Baghawī narrated in his *Muʿjam* a hadith of Shihāb ibn Mālik who had gone in a deputation to the Prophet ﷺ that he had heard the

Prophet speak ﷺ when a woman said to him, “Messenger of Allah, do you not greet us?” He said, “You are from a species which regards much as little, and refuses [to give] things which do not enrich it [by retaining them] and ask questions about what does not concern it.”[16]

Al-ʿUqaylī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Hurayrah ؓ, “The people with the most wrong actions are those who speak most about what does not concern them.”[17]

ʿAmr ibn Qays al-Mulā’ī said, “A man passed by Luqmān when there were people with him and said to him, ‘Are you not the slave of Banī so-and-so?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘The one who used to pasture [the sheep and goats] on such-and-such a mountain?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘What made you attain that which I see [you have attained]?’ He said, ‘Speaking truthfully and lengthy silence about what does not concern me.’”

Wahb ibn Munabbih said, “There were two men in Banī Isrā’īl whose worship took them to the point where they walked on water. While they were walking on water they came upon a man walking on the air, and so they said to him, ‘Slave of Allah, how did you

attain this degree?' He said, 'By a little [amount] of the world: I weaned my self of its appetites, and restrained my tongue from what does not concern me, and I desired what my Lord calls me to, and clung to silence, so that when I swear by Allah, He fulfils my oath, and if I ask Him, He gives me.'" They entered upon one of the Companions when he was [terminally] ill and his face was radiant. So they asked him the reason for his face's radiance and he said, "There was no action in which I placed more confidence than in two qualities: I used not to talk about what did not concern me, and my heart was at peace towards the Muslims."

Muwarriq al-ʿIjlī said, "There is a matter which I have been seeking since such-and-such a year which I have not been able [to find] but which I will never stop seeking." They said, "What is it?" He said, "Restraining myself from what does not concern me." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it.

Asad ibn Mūsā said, "Abū Maʿshar told us from Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb ﵁ that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The first to come in to you is a man of the Garden,' and ʿAbdullāh ibn Salām entered. People stood up and told him [what had been said].

They said, ‘Tell us what action of yours is the surest to you personally?’ He said, ‘My actions are weak. The surest things in which I hope are to have a sound heart and my leaving alone what does not concern me.’”

Abū ʿUbaydah related from al-Ḥasan that he said, “One of the signs of Allah’s turning away from the slave is that He busies him with that which does not concern him.” Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh at-Tustarī said, “Whoever talks about what does not concern him, then he is deprived of truthfulness.” Maʿrūf said, “The slave’s talking about what does not concern him is Allah ﷻ ceasing to preserve him.”

This hadith shows that man giving up what does not concern him is of the excellence of his Islam, so that if he gives up what does not concern him and does everything which does concern him then he has perfected the excellence of his Islam. Many hadith are narrated on the superiority of the one whose Islam is made good and that it multiplies one’s good actions and atones for one’s wrong actions, and the clear outward meaning is that the amount of the multiplication is according to the degree which one makes good one’s Islam.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When any of you makes good his Islam then every good action that he does is recorded as ten the like of it up to seven hundred multiples and every wrong action which he does is recorded as the like of it until he meets Allah ﷻ.”[18] The good action must be recorded as ten multiples of actions the like of it, and the increase above and beyond that is according to the measure of the excellence of the Islam, the purity of the intention, the need for that action, and its merit – such as spending on *jihād* and on the Ḥajj, relatives, orphans and poor people [all of which have different merits], and the moments of need for that expenditure. That which is narrated from ʿAtiyyah from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ bears that out, when he said [the *āyah*]:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا

“‘Those who bring a good action will receive ten like it,’[19] was revealed about nomadic desert Arabs.” Someone said, “What is there for the Emigrants?” He said, “More than that,” then he recited His words, exalted is He:

وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْراً عَظِيماً

"And if there is a good deed Allah will multiply it and pay out a huge reward direct from Him."[20]

An-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the slave submits [and becomes a Muslim] and makes good his Islam Allah writes every good action for him which he had collected, and every wrong action which he had collected is effaced. Then after that there is retaliation [for acts done against others]. The good action [will be recorded] as ten the like of it up to seven hundred multiples. The wrong action [will be recorded] as the like of it unless Allah overlooks it." In another version there is, "Someone said to him, 'Take to action.'"

What is meant [in the above hadith] by the good and wrong actions which he had collected are those which he had previously done before Islam, which shows that he will be rewarded when he becomes a Muslim for his good actions performed in the state of *kufr*, and his wrong actions will be obliterated when he becomes a Muslim, but however on the precondition that he makes good his Islam, and is wary of doing those wrong actions while he is a

Muslim. Imam Aḥmad has expressly stated that and that which is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ shows that. He said, “We said, ‘Messenger of Allah, are we to be taken to task for what we did in the condition of ignorance?’ He said, ‘As for whoever of you acts well in Islam then he will not be taken to task for them. Whoever acts badly will be taken to task for his deeds done in the condition of ignorance and in Islam.’”

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷺ that he said to the Prophet ﷺ while he was accepting Islam, “‘I want to make a stipulation.’ He said, ‘What do you want to stipulate?’ I said, ‘That I be forgiven.’ He said, ‘Haven’t you learnt that Islam ruins [the wrong actions] which were before it.’” Imam Aḥmad also narrated it and his wording is, “…that Islam cuts off that which was before it of wrong actions.” This is interpreted to refer to excellent complete Islam in order to unify it with the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd which precedes it.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* also there is that Hakim ibn Hizam said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, what do you think about matters which I used to do before Islam in the condition of ignorance such as *ṣadaqah*, freeing slaves,

keeping good ties with relatives; is there a reward for them?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'You became a Muslim with that which you had sent ahead of good.'" In another narration of his there is that he said, "Then I said, 'By Allah! I will not leave any [good] thing which I did in the condition of ignorance but that I will do the like of it in Islam.'" This shows that the *kāfir* is rewarded for his good actions when he submits [in Islam] as does the preceding hadith of Abū Saʿīd.

Someone has said, "His wrong actions in the condition of associating partners with Allah are transformed into good actions and he will be rewarded for them," which is derived from His words, exalted is He:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ

"[Amongst the slaves of the All-Merciful are] those who do not call on any other god together with Allah and do not kill anyone Allah has forbidden – except with a legal right – and do not fornicate. Anyone who does that will receive an evil punishment and on the

Day of Rising his punishment will be doubled and he will be humiliated in it timelessly forever – except for those who repent and believe and do right action. Allah will transform the wrong actions of such people into good."[21] Commentators have differed about this 'transformation' and have taken up two positions:

Some of them say, "It is in the world," meaning that Allah exchanges *īmān* and right actions in place of his *kufr* and acts of disobedience for someone who becomes a Muslim and turns in repentance to Him. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī relates this statement in *Gharīb al-hadith* (Unusual Hadith) from most of the commentators [of the Qur'ān], among whom he named: Ibn ʿAbbās, ʿAṭā', Qatādah, as-Suddī and ʿIkrimah. I say that it is also the well-known position of al-Ḥasan .

He [Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī] said, "Al-Ḥasan, Abū Mālik and others said, 'It especially refers to the people who associate partners with Allah and does not refer to the Muslims.'" I say that this statement is only sound if the transformation or exchange happens in the next life, as will follow. As for if someone says that it is in the world, then the *kāfir*, when he becomes a Muslim, and the Muslim, when he turns in repentance, are the same

in that, rather when the Muslim turns in repentance he is in a better state than the *kāfir* when he becomes a Muslim.

He said, “Others say that the transformation happens in the next life, and that a good action is made for them in place of every wrong action. Among those [who say so] were ʿAmr ibn Maymūn, Makḥūl, Ibn al-Musayyab and ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.” He said, “And Abū’l-ʿAliyyah, Mujāhid and Khālid Sabalān rejected it, and there are grounds to reject it.” Then he mentioned that whose logical consequence is, that it must be from that, that whoever does a great deal of wrong action is better than someone who does only a little since he will be given for every wrong action a good action, and then he said, “If someone were to ask, ‘Allah only mentions that wrong actions will be exchanged for good actions without mentioning what quantities will be exchanged,’ then it is possible that the meaning of the exchange is that whoever does one wrong action and repents of it will have in exchange one hundred thousand good actions, but that whoever does one thousand wrong actions will be given in exchange one thousand right actions, so that then the

one with the less wrong actions will be in a better condition."

I say that Abū'l-ʿAliyyah rejected this statement on the exchange in the next life and he recited His words, exalted is He:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَراً وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِن سُوَءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَداً بَعِيداً

"On the Day that each self finds the good it did and the evil it did present there in front of it, it will wish there were a great distance between it and them."[22] Some others refuted it [the second position that the exchange is in the after-life] by His words, exalted is He:

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرّاً يَرَهُ

"And whoever does the weight of a tiny ant of evil will see it,"[23] and His words, exalted is He:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِراً وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَداً

“The Book will be set in place and you will see the evil-doers fearful of what is in it. They say, ‘Alas for us! What is this Book which does not pass over any action, small or great, without recording it?’ They will find there everything they did and your Lord will not wrong anyone at all.”[24]

However, this has been answered thus, that the one who turns in repentance will be acquainted with his wrong actions and then they will be turned into good actions.[25] Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī said, “The *mu’min* will be given his book behind a veil from Allah ﷻ and he will read his wrong actions and when he reads them his colour will change because of them until he comes upon his right actions, and when he reads them his colour will return to him. Then he will look again at them and find that his wrong actions will have been changed into good actions. At that he will say:

هَاؤُمُ اقْرَؤُوا كِتَابِيهْ

‘Here, come and read my Book!’[26]”[27] Some relate this from Abū ʿUthmān from Ibn Masʿūd, and some others from Abū ʿUthmān from Salmān.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is a hadith of Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I know the last of the people of the Garden to enter the Garden, and the last of the people of the Fire to come out of it. It is a man who will be brought on the Day of Rising and it will be said, ‘Show him his minor wrong actions and remove from him the major ones.’ So he will be shown his minor wrong actions and it will be said to him, ‘On such-and-such a day you did such-andsuch, and on such-and-such a day you did such-and-such,’ and he will say, ‘Yes,’ being unable to deny it and afraid that his major wrong actions will be shown to him. Then it will be said to him, ‘In place of every wrong action you have a good action.’ He will say, ‘My Lord, I did things which I do not see here.’” He said, “I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ laughing until his molar teeth appeared.”[28]

So then if wrong actions are exchanged for good actions for the one who is being punished for his wrong actions in the Fire, then with respect to the one whose wrong actions are effaced by Islam and sincere pure repentance it is more fitting, because their effacement by that is preferable to Allah than their obliteration through punishment.

Al-Ḥākim narrated by way of al-Faḍl ibn Mūsā from Abū'l-ʿAnbas from his father from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Some people will wish if only they had done more wrong actions.' They said, 'For what reason, Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'The ones whose wrong actions Allah changes into right actions.'"[29] Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated it by way of Sulaymān Abū Dāwūd az-Zuhrī from Abū'l-ʿAnbas from his father from Abū Hurayrah as a *mawqūf* statement, which it more resembles than a *marfūʿ* hadith. Something similar to this is also narrated of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī which contradicts his more famous statement, "The transformation [of wrong actions into good actions] takes place in the world."

As for that which al-Ḥarbī mentioned about the transformation [of wrong actions into good actions] and that whoever's wrong actions are few has an increase in his right actions and whoever has many wrong actions has fewer right actions, then the hadith of Abū Dharr clearly states the refutation of this and that he is given in exchange for every wrong action a right action.

As for his words, “It must be from that, that whoever does a great deal of wrong action is better than someone who does only a little,” then it is said that the transformation [of wrong actions into good actions] is only effective in the case of those who regret their wrong actions and put them in front of their eyes, so that every time they remember them it increases them in fear, anxiety, shame before Allah and hastening to right actions which make atonement, as He says, exalted is He:

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً

“except for whoever repent and believe and do right actions.”[30] Everything we have mentioned is comprised under right action, so that whoever’s state this is, drinks the bitterness of regret and sorrow for his wrong actions many times more than he tasted their sweetness when he did them, so that every wrong action becomes the cause of a right action in order to efface it, so one must not disapprove after this of the transformation of these wrong actions into good actions.

Clear hadith are narrated about how when the *kāfir* becomes a Muslim and makes good his Islam, then the wrong actions he did in the state of associating partners with Allah are transformed into good actions. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Jubayr ibn Nufayr from Abū Farwah Shaṭb that he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "'What do you think of a man who has done every wrong action, and has not left out a major or a minor wrong action? Is he able to repent [and will his repentance be accepted]?' So he said, 'Have you submitted in Islam?' He said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do good actions and give up wrong actions and Allah will make them all good actions for you.' He said, 'And my treacheries and lies?' He said, 'Yes.' So he continued saying '*Allāhu akbar*' until he was hidden from sight."[31] He [aṭ-Ṭabarānī] narrated it in another way with a weak chain of transmission from Salamah ibn Nufayl from the Prophet ﷺ.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated the like of it in a hadith of Makḥūl which is *mursal*. Al-Bazzār narrated the first hadith. He also has from Abū Ṭawīl Shaṭb alMamdūd that he "came to the Prophet ﷺ,..." and then he mentioned the same sense. Abū'l-Qāsim narrated it in this way in his Muʿjam, and mentioned that the correct

[chain of transmission] is from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Jubayr ibn Nufayr as a *mursal* hadith, "That a man came to the Prophet ﷺ who was long of 'shaṭb'" and shaṭb – tall – means mamdūd – extended – so that some of the transmitters misread it and thought that it was the name of a man.

1 *Gharīb:* having a single narrator at some stage of the chain of transmission. Trans.

2 This is the higher station of *iḥsān* where one is aware that one is near to Allah as if one is seeing Him with one's heart. Ed.

3 This is the other station of *iḥsān* where one is aware that Allah is always near him in his knowledge, and that He always sees him. Ed.

4 Aḥmad (3:387), at-Tirmidhī (2458)

5 Sūrah Qāf: 16

6 Sūrah Yūnus: 61

7 Sūrat az-Zukhruf: 80

8 Aḥmad (1:201)

9 *Makārim al-akhlāq* (196)

10 Ibn Ḥibbān (361)

11 Part of a long hadith that is number 29 in this compilation.

12 Sūrat an-Nisā': 114

13 At-Tirmidhī (2412), Ibn Mājah (3974)

14 Sūrat an-Naba': 38

15 At-Tirmidhī (2316)

16 Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar also mentions this narration in *al-Iṣābah* (2:155)

17 As-Suyūṭī mentions it in *al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabīr* (1:137)

18 Al-Bukhārī (42) except for, “until he meets Allah”, Muslim (129)

19 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 160

20 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 40

21 Sūrat al-Furqān: 68-70

22 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān:30

23 Sūrat az-Zilzālah: 8

24 Sūrat al-Kahf: 49

25 Once he is acquainted with his wrong actions; there remains no contradiction with the verses quoted above because they assert that whoever does any wrong will see it, or fear it. That does not mean that those bad deeds cannot be exchanged with good deeds afterwards as a result of one’s repentance. Ed.

26 Sūrat al-Ḥāqqah: 19

27 Ibn Kathīr quotes this from Ibn Abī Ḥātim in his *tafsīr* (8:241)

28 Muslim (190)

29 Al-Ḥākim (4:29, 252)

30 Sūrat al-Furqān: 70

31 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7235)

الحديث الثالث عشر

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ﷺ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿لا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Loving for Others What One Loves for Oneself

Anas ibn Mālik ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “None of you has *īmān* until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” Al-Bukhārī (13) and Muslim (45) narrated it.

They narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Qatādah from Anas, and the wording of Muslim is, “...until he loves for his neighbour” or “for his brother...” because of a doubt [as to whether it was the neighbour or brother mentioned].

Imam Aḥmad ﷺ narrated it and his wording is, “A slave will not reach the reality of *īmān* until he loves for people that which he wants for himself of good.”[1]

This version clarifies the meaning of the narration published in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books, and that what is

meant by negating *īmān* is to negate the attainment of its reality and its furthest limit, because *īmān* is often negated because of the absence of some of its principal elements and duties, such as in his words ﷺ "The adulterer does not commit adultery when he does so while being a *mu'min*. The thief does not steal when he does so while being a *mu'min*. The drinker does not drink wine when he does so while being a *mu'min*,"[2] and his words, "He does not have *īmān* whose neighbour is not safe from his mischiefs."[3]

People of knowledge have differed about perpetrators of major wrong actions as to whether they are called *mu'minūn* with shortcomings in their *īmān* or as to whether they are not called *mu'minūn* but rather, "Muslims but not *mu'minūn*," as in two [different] opinions, both of which are narrated from Imam Aḥmad رحمه الله.

As for perpetrators of minor wrong actions, then the term *mu'minūn* is not entirely removed from them, but rather they are *mu'minūn* with shortcomings in their *īmān* which decreases to the measure of how much of that they do.

The statement that perpetrators of major wrong actions are *mu'minūn* with shortcomings in their *īmān*

is narrated of Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh, and it is the position of Ibn al-Mubārak, Isḥāq, Abū ʿUbayd and others. The statement that they are Muslims but not *mu'minūn* is narrated of Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī, and some say that it is the chosen position of the people of the Sunnah.

Ibn ʿAbbās said, "The light of *īmān* is removed from the adulterer." Abū Hurayrah said, "*Īmān* is taken away from him so that it remains above him like a cloud, so that if he turns in *tawbah* it returns to him."

ʿAbdullāh ibn Rawāḥah and Abū'd-Dardā' said, "*Īmān* is like a shirt which a man sometimes wears and sometimes removes." Imam Aḥmad and others said something similar. It means that when all the qualities of *īmān* are complete, he is wearing it, but that when he falls short in something of it he removes it. All of this indicates that complete perfect *īmān* is that of which none of its necessary requirements are missing.[4]

The meaning is that a part of the complex of the necessary qualities of *īmān* is that a man loves for his *mu'min* brother that which he loves for himself, and that he should dislike for him what he dislikes for himself. If that disappears from him then his *īmān* is deficient because of that. It has been transmitted that

the Prophet ﷺ said to Abū Hurayrah, “Love for people what you love for yourself and you will be a Muslim.” At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated it.

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Muʿādh in which he asked the Prophet ﷺ about the best *īmān*. He said, “The best *īmān* is that you should love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah and employ your tongue in remembrance of Allah.” He said, “And what [else], Messenger of Allah?” He said, “That you love for people what you love for yourself, and that you dislike for them what you dislike for yourself, and that you say what is good or be silent.”[5]

The Prophet ﷺ made entrance into the Garden conditional on this trait, for in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ there is that Yazīd ibn Asad al-Qasrī said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, ‘Do you love the Garden?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘Then love for your brother what you love for yourself.’”[6]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever loves that he should be removed from the Fire and that he should enter the Garden, then let his death overtake him while he has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, and while he brings people what he loves to have

brought to him." There is also in it that Abū Dharr ﷺ, said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'Abū Dharr, I see you as weak, and I love for you what I would love for myself: never take command over two people and never administer the property of an orphan.'"

He only forbade him to do that because of the weakness he saw in him, and he ﷺ loved this for every weak person. He himself only took charge of people's affairs because Allah strengthened him to do that and commanded him to invite all people to obey him, and to undertake the management of their *dīn* and their worldly affairs.

It has been narrated from ʿAlī ﷺ that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ said to me, 'I am pleased for you with that which I am pleased for myself, and I dislike for you that which I dislike for myself: do not recite the Qur'ān while you are *junub* [in need of a *ghusl* because of sexual emission] nor while you are bowing in *rukūʿ* nor while you are prostrate in *sajdah*."[7]

Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ was selling a donkey of his and a man said to him, "Are you pleased with it for me?" He said, "If I was pleased with it, I would not sell it." This is an indication from him that he was not

pleased for his brother to have what he himself was not pleased to have. All of this is a part of the complex of showing sincerity to the generality of the Muslims which is of the entire complex of the *dīn* and whose explanation was previously mentioned in its place.

We have mentioned in the preceding, the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The likeness of the *mu'minūn* in their mutual affection, sympathy and compassion is like the body which when any of its members suffers from a complaint the rest of the body rallies round with fever and sleeplessness." They narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books, and this shows that the *mu'min* is harmed by what harms his *mu'min* brother and is grieved by what grieves him.

The hadith of Anas about which we are now talking shows that the *mu'min* is made happy by whatever makes his *mu'min* brother happy, and that he wants the good for his *mu'min* brother which he wants for himself. All of this only comes from a completely sound heart free from deceit, malice and envy, because from envy it necessarily follows that the envier dislikes that anyone should excel him in good fortune, or even equal him, because he wants to be distinguished from

other people by his merits, and to be absolutely unique because of them. *Īmān* necessarily requires the opposite of that, which is that all the *mu'minūn* share with one in what good fortune Allah has given one without that diminishing anything from what one has oneself.

Allah, exalted is He, in His Book praises those who do not want exalted stations in the earth nor corruption, when He says:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا

"That Abode of the Next World: We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the earth or to cause corruption in it."[8] Ibn Jarīr narrated, with a chain of transmission on which there are some views, that ʿAlī ﷺ said, "A man may be conceited that the thong of his sandal is better than his friend's sandal's thong, and then he comes under His words, 'That Abode of the Next World: We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the earth or to cause corruption in it. The successful outcome is for the godfearing.'"[9] Similarly it is narrated of Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ respecting this *āyah* that he said, "One should

not love that one's sandal is better than another's sandal, nor one's thong better than another's thong."

Someone said, "The interpretation of this is that it is when one wants to boast to others, and not merely when one wants to beautify oneself."[10] ʿIkrimah and other [Qur'ānic] commentators said about this *āyah*, "Exaltation in the earth is arrogance and seeking honour and a position with its ruler. Corruption is to do acts of disobedience."[11]

That which shows that there is no wrong in disliking anyone to excel one in beauty has also been transmitted. Imam Aḥmad ﷺ and al-Ḥākim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ that he said, "I came to the Prophet ﷺ and Mālik ibn Murārah ar-Rahāwī was with him, and I came in as he was saying, 'Messenger of Allah, I have been apportioned such good looks as you see, and I don't like anyone to be superior to me by as much as two sandal thongs or more. Is this not going too far?" He said, "No. That is not going too far, but disregard...," or he said, "ignorance of the truth as foolish and despising people."

Abū Dāwūd narrated the same meaning in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ but in his

hadith “pride” is in place of “going too far”.[12]

So he discounted the idea that his dislike of someone excelling him in good looks would be going too far or would be pride, and he explained going too far and pride as disregarding the truth, i.e. regarding oneself as more important than it and refusing to accept it out of arrogant pride when it contradicts one’s desires. From this, one of the right-acting first generations said, “Humility is that you accept the truth from anyone who brings it, even if they are young. Whoever accepts the truth from whoever brings it to him, whether they are young or old, whether he loves them or not, then he is humble. Whoever refuses to accept the truth because he regards himself as too important beside it [or as compared to the person who speaks it to him] then he is arrogantly proud.”

Despising people is to look down on them and repulse them, which results from looking at oneself and seeing only perfections and looking at others and seeing only imperfections.

On the whole, the *mu’min* ought to love for the *mu’minūn* what he loves for himself, and dislike for them what he dislikes for himself. If he sees in his brother Muslim some defect in his *dīn* then he ought to

exert himself to put it right. One of the right-acting people of the first generations said, “The people who love Allah look by the light of Allah, and they are kind to those who disobey Allah. They hate their actions but show kindness to them so that through their admonitions they might leave their actions. They are afraid that the Fire will consume their bodies. The *mu’min* will not truly be a *mu’min* until he is pleased for people to have what he is pleased for himself. If he sees in someone else some merit by which they excel him then he wishes the like of it for himself. If that merit is related to the *dīn* then it is good. The Prophet ﷺ wished martyrdom (*shahādah*) for himself.”

He said ﷺ “There is [to be] no envy except with respect to two [people]: a man whom Allah gave wealth and he spends it throughout the night and the day [in right action], and a man whom Allah gave the Qur’ān and he recites it throughout the night and throughout the day.”[13]

He said about someone who saw someone else spending from his wealth in obedience to Allah and said, “If I had wealth I would do with it as he does,” that they have the same reward.[14] If it is a worldly

matter [he envies] there is no good in wishing for it, as He says, exalted is He:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا

"He went out among his people in his finery. Those who desired the life of this world said, 'Oh! If only we had the same as Qārūn has been given! What immense good fortune he possesses.' But those who had been given knowledge said, 'Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for those who believe and act rightly.'"[15] As for His words ﷻ:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ

"Do not covet what Allah has given to some of you in preference to others,"[16] they have been interpreted as referring to envy, which is that a man wishes for the same family and wealth which his brother has been given and that it should be [taken from his brother] and given to him, and it is explained as wishing for that which is prevented by the *Sharīʿah* or by ability, such as women wishing that they were men,

or in their wishing to have the same merits in the *dīn* as the men, such as fighting *jihād*, or worldly merits such as [a larger share of] inheritance, intellect, judicial standing as witnesses [where two female witnesses are required as opposed to one male], etc. It is said that the *āyah* is comprehensive and comprises all of those things.

Along with all of this, the *mu'min* ought to grieve over lost religious merits, and so for this reason he is commanded that he should look, with respect to the *dīn*, to whoever is above him, and that he should compete in respect of seeking that with his effort and energy, as He says, exalted is He:

وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ

"Let people with aspiration compete with each other for that!"[17] and he should not dislike anyone sharing with him in that, but rather he should hope that all people aspire and compete for it, and he should urge them to do that. That is a part of the perfection of paying sincere good counsel to one's brothers. Al-Fuḍayl said, "If you love that there should not be someone like you among people, then you have

not discharged the duty of sincerity towards your Lord. How could that be, when you love that they should be less than you?" He is indicating that being sincere towards them means that one loves for them to be over one, and this is a high station and exalted degree in sincerity but it is not obligatory. It is only commanded in the *Sharīʿah* that one love that they should be like oneself. Along with that, if someone excels one in some merit of the *dīn*, one should exert oneself to catch up with him, and grieve over one's own shortcomings and remaining behind instead of catching up with the Outstrippers (*sābiqūn*), not out of envy for what Allah has given them, but rather out of a competitive aspiration with them, unenvious emulation and grief over oneself because of one's shortcomings and remaining behind from the degrees of the Outstrippers.

The *mu'min* ought never to stop seeing himself falling short of the exalted degrees, by which he will derive two precious benefits: diligent exertion in seeking merits and increase in them, and looking at himself and seeking his shortcomings. From this will arise his love that the *mu'minūn* be better than himself, because he will not be pleased that they are in the

same state as he is, just as he will not be pleased for himself to remain in the same state as he is in, but rather he will exert himself diligently to reform himself. Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ said to his son, “As for your father, may Allah not make many such as he among the Muslims.”[18]

How can someone who is not pleased with himself love that the Muslims should be like him if he is truly sincere to them? Rather he would love if only the Muslims were better than him and he would love for himself that he should be better than he is.

If a man does know that Allah has singled him out over others with some merit, and he tells about it because of some benefit of the *dīn*, and his telling is by way of telling about a blessing [he has received], and he also sees himself falling short in showing gratitude, then it is permissible.[19] Ibn Masʿūd said, “I know of no-one who knows the Book of Allah better than I do.” This does not prevent him from loving for people to share with him in that with which He singled him out. Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, “I pass by an *āyah* in the Book of Allah, and I would love that everybody should know about it what I know.” Ash-Shāfiʿī said, “I would love that everybody know this science and that they not

ascribe any of it to me."[20] When ʿUtbah al-Ghulām wanted to break his [voluntary] fast, he would say to one of his brothers who were aware of his deeds, "Bring me some water or dates on which to break my fast, so that you can have the same reward as I do."[21]

1 Ibn Ḥibbān narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (1:229)

2 Al-Bukhārī (2475) and Muslim (57)

3 Al-Bukhārī (6016)

4 Meaning that the simile of *īmān* as a shirt which one puts on and takes off only refers to perfect *īmān*, as for *īmān* in principle it remains on a person until he becomes completely devoid of it and becomes an unbeliever. Ed.

5 Aḥmad (5:247)

6 Aḥmad (4:70)

7 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (1:118,119)

8 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 83

9 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (20:122)

10 Ibn Kathīr prefers this in his *tafsīr*

11 *Tafsīr* aṭ-Ṭabarī (20:122)

12 Abū Dāwūd (4092)

13 Al-Bukhārī (73), Muslim (816)

14 Al-Bukhārī (5026)

15 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 79-80

16 Sūrat an-Nisā':32

17 Sūrat al-Muṭaffifūn: 26

18 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:350)

19 Meaning it is permissible to tell others of the merit that one possesses over them if it fulfils the conditions mentioned.

20 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (9:119)

21 He asked him to do this because of the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ that he said: “Whoever gives the fasting person food to break the fast with, will get the same reward as him without reducing anything from the reward of the fasting person.” (At-Tirmidhī)

الحديث الرابع عشر

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ مَسْعُوْدٍ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿لا يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ إِلاّ بِإِحْدَى ثَلاثٍ: اَلثَّيِّبُ الزَّانِي، وَالنَّفْسُ بِالنَّفْسِ، وَالتَّارِكُ لِدِيْنِهِ، الْمُفَارِقُ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

The Blood of a Muslim

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The blood of a Muslim man is not permitted [to be shed] except for one of three: the adulterous mature person,[1] a person [killed in retaliation] for [the killing of] a person, and one who abandons his *dīn* and separates himself from the community." Al-Bukhārī (6878) and Muslim (1676) narrated it.

They narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from the narration of al-Aʿmash from ʿAbdullāh ibn Murrah from Masrūq from Ibn Masʿūd. In Muslim's narration there is, "one who abandons Islam," instead of his words, "one who abandons his *dīn*".

There are many hadith with the same meaning. Muslim narrated a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ from the Prophet ﷺ which is the like of the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd.

At-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of ʿUthmān ﵁ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "It is not permissible [to spill] the blood of a Muslim man except for one of three [reasons]: a man who disbelieved after his [acceptance of] Islam, or who committed adultery after having experienced intercourse in a valid marriage, or who killed a person but not [in retaliation] for another person [whom he had killed]."[2]

In a narration of an-Nasā'ī there is, "A man who commits adultery after having experienced intercourse in a valid marriage must be stoned, or who kills deliberately must be killed in retaliation, or who reneges after his Islam must be killed."[3]

This meaning has been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ from the narration of Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Hurayrah, Anas ibn Mālik and others, and we have mentioned the hadith of Anas previously. In it there is the explanation that these three matters are the due of Islam by which it is permissible [to spill] the blood of

someone who witnesses that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. The sentence of death for every single one of these three matters is something absolutely agreed upon by the Muslims.

As for the adultery of the person who has been married, the Muslims are unanimous that the sentence for that is that he is to be stoned until he is dead. The Prophet ﷺ had Māʿiz and [the woman called] al-Ghāmidiyyah stoned.[4] There used to be in the Qur'ān that [verse] whose wording was abrogated [but whose judgement remains in effect], "The full-grown man and the full-grown woman, stone them absolutely as a punishment from Allah. And Allah is mighty, wise."[5]

Ibn ʿAbbās derived stoning from the Qur'ān from His words, exalted is He:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيراً مِّمَّا كُنتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَن كَثِيرٍ

"O People of the Book! Our Messenger has come to you, making clear to you much of the Book that you have kept concealed, and passing over a lot.[6]"[7] He said, "Whoever rejects stoning rejects the Qur'ān in a

way which he did not expect," then he recited this *āyah* and said, "Stoning was one of the things they kept concealed." An-Nasā'ī[8] and al-Ḥākim[9] narrated it and he [the latter] said, "It has a sound chain of transmission."

It is also derived from His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التَّوْرَاةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا ... وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ

"We sent down the Tawrah[10] containing guidance and light, and the Prophets who had submitted themselves gave judgement by it for the Jews..." up until His words, "Judge between them by what Allah has sent down."[11] Az-Zuhrī said, "It has reached us that this was revealed about the two Jews whom the Prophet ﷺ had stoned and he said, 'I pass judgement according to what is in the Tawrah,' and he gave the command concerning them and they were stoned."[12]

Muslim narrated the story of the two Jews being stoned in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the hadith of al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib who said in his hadith, "So Allah revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ

‘O Messenger! Do not be grieved by those who rush into rejection (kufr)’[13] and He revealed:

وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

‘Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down, such people are rejectors (*kāfirūn*)’[14] all of which are about the *kāfirūn*.”[15]

Imam Aḥmad also narrated it and he has, “So Allah revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ ... إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ

‘O Messenger! Do not be grieved by those who rush into rejection’ up to ‘If you are given this, then take it’[16] for they said, ‘Go to Muḥammad. If he gives judgement that the adulterers’ faces should be blackened with charcoal and they should be flogged then accept it. If he gives judgement that they should be stoned then beware.’ Up to His words:

وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down, such people are rejectors,' he said [this was revealed] concerning the Jews."[17]

The story of the stoning of the two Jews is narrated in a hadith of Jābir in which he said, "So Allah revealed:

فَإِن جَآءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِن تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ . . . وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ

'If they come to you, you can either judge between them or turn away from them,' up to His words, 'But if you do judge, judge between them justly.'[18]"[19] Allah had at first ordered that adulterous women should be imprisoned until death took them or Allah should appoint a way for them, then later Allah did appoint a way for them.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿUbādah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Take from me! Take from me! Allah has appointed a way for them [the adulterous women]: a virgin who fornicates with a virgin should be flogged a hundred times and exiled for a year. Two mature people [who commit adultery] should be flogged a hundred times and stoned."[20]

A group of the people of knowledge based themselves on the clear outward text of this hadith and regarded it as obligatory that the person who has experienced intercourse in a valid marriage [and then commits adultery] should be flogged a hundred times and then stoned, as ʿAlī did with Shurāḥah al-Hamdāniyyah. He then said, "I had her flogged according to the Book of Allah and then I had her stoned according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,"[21] indicating that in the Book of Allah there is mention of the flogging of the two adulterers without any distinction between someone who had experienced intercourse in a valid marriage and a virgin, and then the Sunnah has the particular judgement of the stoning of the adulterous person who had experienced intercourse in a valid marriage, as well as there existing derivations of the judgement from the Book of Allah. This statement is the most well-known from Imam Aḥmad ﷺ and from Isḥāq, and it is the position of al-Ḥasan and a party of the right-acting first generations.

Another party of them said, “If the two persons who had each experienced intercourse in a valid marriage before were mature people they should be flogged and stoned. If they were both youths they should be stoned without flogging, because the wrong action of the mature person is uglier, particularly adultery.” This was the statement of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, and it has also been narrated from him with him ascribing [it to the Prophet ﷺ] but that ascription is not sound. It is also narrated from Aḥmad and Isḥāq.

As for the retaliatory killing of a person for [having killed] a person, it means that when a legally responsible Muslim deliberately kills another person without any right he should be killed for that. The Qur’ān shows that, in His words, exalted is He:

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ

“We prescribed in it for them: a life for a life.”[22] And He said, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنْثَى بِالْأُنْثَى

"O you who have *īmān*! Retaliation is prescribed for you in the case of people killed: free man for free man, slave for slave, female for female."[23] There are some exceptions from the general rule contained in His words, exalted is He, which are:

If a father kills his child. The majority take the position that he is not to be killed for that, and there is a sound transmission of this view from ʿUmar ﷺ. It has been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways[24] but there is some discussion [as to the authenticity] of their chains of transmission. Mālik said, "If he deliberately did it with a deliberation about which there can be no doubt, such as he slaughtered him [as animals are slaughtered by cutting the throat], then he is killed for that, but if he clipped him with a sword [and cut off part of him] or a staff [thus killing him] then he is not to be killed." Al-Bittī[25] said, "He is killed for killing him by every type of deliberate [killing] because of the general nature [of the command]."

Also, if a free man kills a slave, then the majority take the stand that he is not to be killed for [killing] him. Some hadith are narrated about that but there are some things said about their chains of

transmission. Someone said, “He is killed for killing someone else’s slave but not for his own.” That was the position of Abū Ḥanīfah and his people. Some said that he is to be killed for killing his own slave and for someone else’s slave, and this is narrated of ath-Thawrī and a party of the people of hadith because of the hadith of Samurah from the Prophet ﷺ, “Whoever kills his slave, we will kill him. Whoever mutilates him [his slave by cutting off a part of his body], then we will mutilate him,”[26] but Imam Aḥmad and others challenge [the authenticity of this hadith].

There is a unanimous agreement that there is no retaliation due to slaves against free men because of [injury to] limbs, which shows that this hadith is discarded and not acted on. This is from that by which it is shown that what is meant by His words, exalted is He, “The person for a person” refers to free people, because He mentions after it the retaliation for limbs which is exclusive to free people.

There is also the case where a Muslim kills a *kāfir*. If the man is from a people with whom the Muslims are at war, then there is no disagreement that the Muslim is not killed in retaliation, since there is no doubt that it is permissible to kill someone with whom

one is at war. If the person is under the contract of the *dhimmah*[27] or he is from a people with whom the Muslims have a treaty then the majority still hold that he [the Muslim] may not be killed because of him. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from ʿAlī from the Prophet ﷺ [that he said], "A Muslim is not killed because of [killing] a *kāfir*."[28]

Abū Ḥanīfah and a group of the *fiqh* scholars of Kufa said that he must be killed because of that. Rabīʿah narrated from Ibn al-Baylamānī that the Prophet ﷺ killed a man from the people of the *qiblah* [a Muslim] because of a man [whom he had killed] from the people of the *dhimmah*, and that he said, 'I am the truest of those who fulfil their *dhimmah* [covenant of protection]."[29] But this is a weak *mursal* hadith which Imam Aḥmad, Abū ʿUbaydah, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī, al-Jawzajānī, Ibn al-Mundhir and ad-Dāraquṭnī all declared to be weak, and he said, "Ibn al-Baylamānī is weak, and no proof is established by him if he connected a hadith [directly back to the Prophet ﷺ] so how could it be if the hadith is *mursal*?" Al-Jawzajānī said, "Rabīʿah took it from Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Yaḥyā from Ibn al-Mundhir from Ibn al-Baylamānī, but Ibn Abī Yaḥyā is someone whose

hadith are rejected. Among the *mursal* hadith of Abū Dāwūd there is another *mursal* hadith that, ‘On the Day of Khaybar, the Prophet ﷺ killed a Muslim for having killed a *kāfir* by treachery while he was unawares, and that he said, “I have the most right to, and I am the truest who fulfils his *dhimmah* [covenant of protection].”’”[30] This is the school of Mālik and the people of Madīnah that killing someone stealthily while he is unaware does not have to fulfil the stipulation of equality [between the killer and the killed] and that a Muslim is killed for killing a *kāfir* in this way. It is in this way that they interpret the hadith of Ibn al-Baylamānī also on the estimation that it is sound.

Another example is that there is no disagreement that a man who kills a woman is killed in retaliation for her. In the book of ʿAmr ibn Ḥazm there is from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “A man is killed [in retaliation] for [killing] a woman,”[31] and it is a sound narration that, “He ﷺ killed a Jew who killed a slave girl.”[32] Most of the people of knowledge agree that the relatives and guardians of the man are not to be paid anything, but it is narrated of ʿAlī that they have to be paid a half of the blood-money,[33] since the blood-

money of a woman is half of the blood-money of a man. This is also narrated as the position of a group of the right-acting first generations and Aḥmad, according to one narration from him.

As for someone who abandons his *dīn* and separates from the community, what is meant by that is someone who abandons Islam and reneges, and separates himself from the community of the Muslims as has been clearly declared in the hadith of ʿUthmān. He is only excluded [from the category of non-Muslims and included], along with those whose blood it is permissible to spill from the people of the two *shahādahs*, because one takes into account the responsibility that he had before his apostasy and that the judgement of Islam is obligatory on him after that. For this reason he is asked to turn in *tawbah*, and he is sought to return to Islam. However [if he returns to Islam] there is a famous disagreement among people of knowledge as to whether he is obliged to make up for all the acts of worship which he missed during the time of his apostasy.

Also, someone might abandon his *dīn* and separate himself from the community while still affirming the two *shahādahs* and claiming that he is a Muslim, such

as if he disputes any of the pillars of Islam, or curses Allah and His Messenger, or rejects some of the angels or the prophets, or the Books which are mentioned in the Qur'ān while having knowledge of that. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever changes his *dīn*, then kill him."[34]

According to most of the people of knowledge there is no difference in this between men and women. There are those of them who say that a woman is not killed for reneging just as women who live in the war-zone are not to be killed in warfare, but it is only their men who are killed. This is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions. They regarded *kufr* that happens [to someone who is already a Muslim] as just the same as the original *kufr* [that preceded acceptance of Islam]. The dominant majority made a distinction between them and regarded the former as much more serious because the person had originally been a Muslim. It is for this reason that a person is killed for apostasy from it [Islam] who would not have been killed in the war-zone, such as a very old man, someone who is chronically ill, and a blind person, none of whom would be killed in warfare.

His words ﷺ "one who abandons his *dīn* and separates himself from the community," shows that if he repented and returned to Islam he would not be killed, since he is no longer someone who has abandoned his *dīn* after his return, nor is he separated from the community.

If someone says that making exception of this one from those whose blood is protected of the people of the two *shahādahs*, shows that he is killed even if he affirms the two *shahādahs*, just as the adulterer who had previously experienced intercourse in a valid marriage is killed, and someone who kills someone else [even though they affirm the two *shahādahs*], and that this shows that the renegade's[35] repentance is not accepted, as is said to be the position of alḤasan, or that that is interpreted to refer to someone who was born in Islam who reneges, that his repentance is not accepted [if he reneges on Islam], and that only the repentance of someone who had been a *kāfir* and then accepted Islam is accepted if he reverts to *kufr* [and then repents and returns to Islam] according to the words of a party of the people of knowledge including al-Layth ibn Saʿd, Aḥmad in one narration from him, and Isḥāq. Then it is said [in response] that he is only

excepted from the Muslims [whose blood is protected] taking account of the condition he was in [of being a Muslim] before his abandoning his *dīn*, as it has been previously established, and that this is not like the adulterer who had been married, or the person who kills another, because their being killed is obligatory as a punishment because of their previous criminal actions which it is not possible to repair.

But as for the renegade, he is only to be killed because of the condition he is presently in, which is his abandoning his *dīn* and separating himself from the community, so that when he returns to his *dīn* and to according with the community, then that attribute which made permissible the spilling of his blood has been removed, and the permissibility of spilling his blood passes, and Allah knows best.

If someone says that an-Nasā'ī narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The blood of a Muslim man is not permissible[36] except for one of three reasons: an adulterer who had experienced intercourse in a valid marriage is stoned, a man who kills intentionally is killed, and a man who goes out of Islam and wages war on Allah and His Messenger is killed or crucified or exiled from the land,"[37] and that

this shows that what is meant is someone who unites apostasy with waging war. Then it is said [in response] that Abū Dāwūd narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ with another wording, which is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The blood may not be spilt of a Muslim man who witnesses that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah except for one of three [reasons]: if he commits adultery after tasting intercourse in a valid marriage, for then he is to be stoned; a man who revolts in war against Allah and His Messenger, for then he is to be killed or crucified or exiled from the land; or if he kills a person, for then he must be killed [in retaliation] for him."[38]

This shows that whoever of the Muslims is found to be waging war [against the Muslims], then the leader [the imam] has the absolute choice [between the above three penalties], as the people of knowledge of Madīnah such as Mālik and others say. The former narration may be interpreted to mean that his going out of Islam is his going out from the rulings of Islam and it may be interpreted according to its apparent outward meaning and those who say that the *āyah* concerning those who wage war[39] is particularly about

renegades derive a proof from this so that whoever reneges and wages war is treated according to the *āyah*, and that those who wage war without reneging are judged according to the rulings concerning Muslims, such as retaliation [for wounds and killing] and amputation for theft. This is in one narration from Aḥmad ﷺ but it is not well-known of him. A party of the right-acting first generations, of whom were Abū Qilābah and others, took a similar stand saying that the *āyah* which refers to those who wage war [on Allah and His Messenger] is particularly about renegades.

In any case, the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ has different wordings and it has been narrated from her as a *marfūʿ* hadith and it has been narrated from her as a *mawqūf* statement. As for the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ there is no disagreement about its wording, and it is firmly established and its authenticity is agreed upon. However, it is said against this[40] that the killing of a Muslim has been narrated for other than these three reasons:

For example, sodomites. It has been transmitted in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Kill the one who does it and the one he does it to."[41]

Most of the people of knowledge, such as Mālik and Aḥmad, take a stand based on this and they say that it renders execution obligatory in every state, whether the person is someone who experienced intercourse in a valid marriage or not. It has been narrated of ʿUthmān that he said, "It is not permitted [to spill] the blood of a Muslim man except for four reasons," and then he mentioned the three aforementioned and added, "and a man who does the deed of the people of Lūt."[42]

An example is the person who has intercourse with someone whom he is not permitted to marry because of relationship to them. The command to kill such a person has been narrated. It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ killed someone who married his father's wife,[43] and that a group of the people of knowledge based themselves on that and regarded it as obligatory to execute him, whether he was someone who had experienced intercourse in a valid marriage or not.

Another example is the magician. In at-Tirmidhī there is a hadith of Jundub which is a *marfūʿ* hadith, that, "The punishment for the magician is a blow with the sword,"[44] and it is also said that the authentic position is that this hadith stops short at Jundub [as a

mawqūf statement], but the judgement is the position of a substantial body of the people of knowledge, of whom are ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Mālik, Aḥmad and Isḥāq, but these say that he becomes a *kāfir* by his use of magic so that the ruling on him is really the ruling on the renegade.

Another example is someone who has intercourse with animals about which there is narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith[45] on which a party of the people of knowledge based themselves.

Another example is someone who abandons the prayer, because he is killed according to many of the people of knowledge although they say that he is not a *kāfir*. We have dealt with this previously in greater detail.

Another example is someone who drinks wine for the fourth time, and the command for that is transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways, and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ رضي الله عنهما and others based themselves on it. However, most of the people of knowledge consider that execution [for this offence] has been abrogated. It has been narrated that someone who drank wine for the fourth time was brought to the Prophet ﷺ and he did not kill him.[46] In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-*

Bukhārī there is that, “A man used to be brought to the Prophet ﷺ for drinking wine, and another man cursed him and said, ‘How often he has been brought!’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Do not curse him, because he loves Allah and His Messenger,’ and he did not kill him for it.”[47]

It has also been narrated that the thief is to be killed for the fifth theft,[48] and it is said that some of the people of *fiqh* took that as their position.

Another example is that which is related of him ﷺ that he said, “When allegiance is sworn to two *khalīfahs* then kill the second of them.”[49] Muslim narrated it from a hadith of Abū Saʿīd, but al-ʿUqaylī regarded all the hadith on this subject to be weak.

Another example of this is his words ﷺ, “Whoever comes to you and you are all agreed upon one man [as the *khalīfah*] and then he wants to break your act of allegiance [literally ‘break your staff’] or break up the unity of your community [*jamāʿah*] then kill him.” And in another narration there is, “Then strike his head with the sword, whoever he may be.” Muslim also narrated it by way of ʿArfajah.[50]

Another example is whoever unsheathes his weapon [for fighting]. AnNasā’ī narrated in a hadith of

Ibn az-Zubayr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever unsheathes his weapon then brings it down, his blood is for nothing.”[51] It has been narrated from Ibn az-Zubayr as a *marfūʿ* hadith and as a *mawqūf* statement. Al-Bukhārī said, “It is only a *mawqūf* statement.”

Aḥmad ﷺ was asked about the meaning of this hadith and he said, “I don’t know. What is this?” Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh said, “He means that it is permitted to kill whoever unsheathes his weapon then brings it down upon people so much that he indiscriminately kills people, and that is the behaviour of the Ḥarūriyyah[52] who kill men, women and children indiscriminately.” However there is something narrated from ʿĀ’ishah ﷺ which contradicts the interpretation of Isḥāq. Al-Ḥākim narrated from the narration of ʿAlqamah ibn Abī ʿAlqamah from his mother that a slave unsheathed his sword against his master during the amirate of Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ and faced him with it [to attack him], and people grabbed him and restrained him. So the master went to ʿĀ’ishah and she said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Whoever points with a blade at any of the Muslims meaning to kill him then it is obligatory to kill him.” So the master decided on that basis and killed him. He

[al-Ḥākim] said, “It is *ṣaḥīḥ* according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs [al-Bukhārī and Muslim].”[53]

It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in a *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith that he said, “Whoever is killed in defence of his property is a martyr (*shahīd*).”[54] And in another narration, “Whoever is killed defending his blood is a martyr (*shahīd*).”[55]

So that if a man’s property or life are intended he defends them with what is easiest. This is the school of ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad, may Allah show them both mercy. Concerning whether or not he must intend that he does not mean to kill them [those who mean to take his property or cause him physical harm], there are two [differing] narrations from Imam Aḥmad.

A party took the position that if someone intends to take your property or cause you physical harm then it is permitted to kill them in anticipation. A thief broke into Ibn ʿUmar’s [house] and [Ibn ʿUmar] confronted him with an unsheathed sword and if they had not intervened between them he would have killed him.[56] Al-Ḥasan was asked about a thief who entered a man’s house with a blade, and he said, “Let him kill him by any means possible.” And these, one of whom is

Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī, permit his being killed even if he turns away in flight without committing a crime.

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The house is your sanctuary, so whoever enters your sanctuary against you, then kill him.”[57] However, there is weakness in its chain of transmission.

Another example is the killing of a Muslim who spies on the Muslims on behalf of the *kāfirūn*. Aḥmad hesitated over it, but a party of Malik’s companions regarded it as permissible to kill him, as well as Ibn ʿAqīl of our colleagues. Some of the Mālikīs said, “If he repeatedly does that it is permissible to kill him.” Those who regarded it as permissible to kill him sought a proof from the words of the Prophet ﷺ about Ḥāṭib ibn Abī Balta’ah when he wrote a letter to the people of Makkah informing them of the travelling of the Prophet ﷺ towards them, and telling them to take their precautions. ʿUmar asked permission to kill him, but he said ﷺ “He took part in Badr,”[58] but he did not say, “That which would make his killing permissible has not occurred.” He only gave as the reason for not killing him the existence of a preventative cause, which was his being present at Badr and Allah’s

forgiveness of the people of Badr, but this reason which prevented his being killed does not exist for anyone after him.[59]

Another example is that which Abū Dāwūd narrated in his *mursal* hadith in a version from Ibn al-Musayyab that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever strikes his father, then kill him."[60] It is narrated with a complete chain of transmission in another way but it is not sound, and Allah knows best.

Know that[61] some of these hadith which we have mentioned are not sound and no one who is to be reckoned with has taken a stand on them, such as the hadith, "Whoever strikes his father, then kill him," and the hadith about killing the thief who steals for the fifth time. It is possible to refer all of the rest of the textual sources back to the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, because the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd comprises the meaning that it is not permitted [to spill] the blood of a Muslim except for one of three types [of reason][62]: either because he leaves his *dīn* and separates himself from the community of the Muslims, or because he commits adultery while he is someone who has experienced intercourse within a valid marriage, or because he kills a person without right.

We take from this that it is not permitted to kill a Muslim except for one of three reasons: abandoning the *dīn*, spilling blood which it is forbidden to spill, violating the private parts of someone with whom it is forbidden, and that these three types and no others are the ones which make permissible the spilling of a Muslim's blood.

As for violating the private parts of someone with whom it is forbidden, it has been mentioned in the hadith that it refers to the one who commits adultery after his having experienced intercourse within a valid marriage, and this is – and Allah knows best – [mentioned] by way of an example, because the one who has experienced intercourse within a valid marriage has completed the blessing on himself by his fulfilment of this appetite through marriage, so that then if he tries to attain it afterwards by means of private parts which are forbidden to him, it becomes permissible to spill his blood. Sometimes, [in the case of a violation] the condition of being someone who has experienced intercourse in a valid marriage may be absent and so another condition replaces it, which is that the private parts in question are never in any circumstances permissible, either absolutely such as in

sodomy, or with respect to the one having sexual intercourse, such as someone who has intercourse with a relative whom it is for him for him to marry by contract[63] or otherwise. So the question is whether this description stands in the place of having experienced sexual intercourse in a valid marriage or not [thus requiring the death of the person] and is it a substitute for it? This is the locus of discussion among the people of knowledge. The hadith show that it is a substitute for it [the condition of having experienced sexual intercourse in a valid marriage] and is sufficient reason for making the spilling of blood permissible.

As for spilling blood which it is forbidden to do so, then the question is whether creating civil disturbances which lead to the shedding of blood, such as dividing the Muslim community into groups, breaking the oath of allegiance, pledging allegiance to a second leader, and showing the *kuffār* the Muslims' weak points, stand in place of it [as sufficient reason for the execution of the perpetrator]? This is the point of discussion among the people of knowledge. That which shows that it is permissible to kill someone for the like of the above is narrated from ʿUmar.

Similarly, unsheathing the sword seeking to kill: does it stand in place of actual killing as sufficient reason permitting the spilling of the perpetrator's blood or not? Both Ibn az-Zubayr and ʿĀ'ishah thought that it stood in place of actual killing in that respect.

Similarly, does highway robbery alone permit the killing [of the robber] or not, since it [highway robbery] is thought to lead to the spilling of blood which is forbidden to spill? Allah ﷻ says:

مَن قَتَلَ نَفْساً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً

"if someone kills another person – unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth – it is as if he had murdered all mankind,"[64] which shows that it is only permissible to kill a person for two reasons: first, in retaliation for killing another person, second, for causing corruption in the land. Comprised in corruption in the land are waging war, reneging [on the *dīn*] and adultery, for all of that is corruption in the land. Similarly, repeatedly and persistently drinking wine is a cause for the suspicion that it will lead to spilling blood which it is not permissible to spill. At the time of ʿUmar ﷺ the Companions agreed unanimously that [the drinker]

should be flogged eighty times, because they regarded drunkenness as being a likely cause of fabrication of tales and slanderous immoral allegations [against the honour of *mu'minah* women] which require eighty lashes. When the delegation of ʿAbd al-Qays came to the Prophet ﷺ and he forbade them drinks and making *nabīdh* [an intoxicating drink] in vessels, he said, "One of you may confront his cousin – meaning when he drinks – and strike him with the sword," and there was among them a man who had been wounded in such a fashion, and he had concealed it out of shame before the Prophet ﷺ.[65] All of this relates to the permissibility of [spilling] blood because of killing, substituting the probable causes of killing in place of actual [killing]. But is that abrogated or is its judgement still valid? This is the area on which there is some discussion.

As for abandoning the *dīn* and separating from the community, it means reneging on the *dīn* of Islam even though someone says the two *shahādahs*. For if someone curses Allah and His Messenger while affirming the two *shahādahs*, then it becomes permissible to spill his blood because by that he has abandoned his *dīn*.

Similarly, if he shows disrespect for the written copy of the Qur'ān and throws it into filth, or denies what is necessarily well known of the *dīn* such as the prayer and the like of those acts which remove one from the *dīn*.

Does leaving out any of the five pillars of Islam stand in place of that? This is based on the question as to whether one goes out of the *dīn* entirely by that or not. Those who think that such a person has gone entirely out of the *dīn* regard it as being the same as leaving out the two *shahādahs* or denying them. Those who do not regard it as leaving the *dīn* differ on whether he is killed because of the fact that he has left out one of the fundamentals of Islam, or not because he has not [in their view] left the *dīn*.

In this section too is that which many of the people of knowledge say on killing the one who calls others to innovation, because they regard that as closely resembling going out of the *dīn*, and that it is a means to that end. However, if he conceals [his innovation] and does not call others to it, then the judgement on him is the same as that on the hypocrites when they conceal [their hypocrisy and so are treated as ordinary Muslims]. However, if he calls others to that, his crime

is serious because of his causing corruption and deviation in the community. It has been authentically narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he gave the command to fight the Khawārij[66] and kill them.[67]

The people of knowledge differ as to their status. Some say that they [the Khawārij] are *kuffār* so that they are killed because of their *kufr*. Some say that they are killed because of the corruption they create in the land by their spilling Muslims' blood and their declaring them [the Muslims] *kuffār*, and this is the position of Mālik and a group of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs]. They regard it as permissible to initiate fighting against them and to equip and train oneself to cause them harm. Some say that if they invite others to their way they are to be fought, but that if they show openly what they are doing but do not call others to it then they are not to be fought, and this is the position of Aḥmad رحمه الله and Isḥāq, and it relates back to the principle that one must fight whoever invites others to a strong innovation. Some do not think that one may initiate fighting against them until they begin fighting, which renders fighting them permissible, by their spilling blood and the like, as is

narrated of ʿAlī ﷺ and that is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and many of our colleagues.

It has been narrated in many different ways that the Prophet ﷺ ordered the death of a man who prayed, and that he said, “If he is killed it will be the first trial and the last of them,”[68] and in another narration, “If he were to be killed, no two men of my community would differ until the appearance of the Dajjāl.”[69] Imam Aḥmad ﷺ and others narrated it. So some seek to prove by this that one should kill an innovator if by his death his mischief will be kept away from the Muslims.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and others tell that in the school of Mālik it is permissible to kill someone who calls others to innovation.

So that by this measure, all the texts on killing are reducible to that which is in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ and to Allah belongs the praise.

Many of the people of knowledge say about many of these texts which we have mentioned here that they are abrogated by the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, but on this there are two different views:

First, we do not know that the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd is of a later date than all of these texts

particularly since Ibn Masʿūd is one of the earliest of the Emigrants, and many of these texts are narrated by those who became Muslims much later such as Abū Hurayrah, Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh and Muʿāwiyah, and all of them related the hadith that the wine-drinker who does so for the fifth time should be killed.

Second, that a text specific about a detail cannot be abrogated by a general text even if the general text is of a much later date, according to the authentic position upon which the dominant majority of the people of knowledge agree, because the specific text shows its meaning by its precise wording, but the general text [concerning the same issue] apparently indicates it [but with the possiblity of another meaning being the correct]. Therefore, the aparent sense does not invalidate the judgement of a precise wording. It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ ordered a man to be killed who lied about him in his lifetime and said to a section of the Arabs, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent me and told me to rule over you in respect of homicide cases and financial matters.” This has been narrated in many different ways all of which are weak. In some of them there is that this man had proposed to one of their women in

the period of ignorance [before Islam], and they had refused to marry her to him, and that when he said this thing to them they believed him, and he then went to dwell with this woman, so that at that moment he had committed adultery and furthermore ascribed the permissibility of that to the Prophet ﷺ which is *kufr* and apostasy from the *dīn*.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that "The Prophet ﷺ told ʿAlī to kill the Copt who used to go and visit Mariyah, the mother of [the Prophet ﷺ's] son, so that people had begun to gossip about that. When ʿAlī found out that he was a eunuch he left him alone."[70] Some of them interpreted it that the Copt had not accepted Islam, and that if the person who is under a treaty does something which harms the Muslims then he has broken his treaty, so how would it be if he harmed the Prophet ﷺ? However, someone else said, "No, he was a Muslim, but he had been forbidden to do that, but he wouldn't stop, until, because of him, people came to gossip about the domestic life of the Prophet ﷺ and hurting the Prophet ﷺ in his domestic life makes it permissible to spill his blood. However, when his innocence became clearly evident, then Mari yah's innocence became clear to people so that the reason

which would have given validity to his execution was removed."

It has been narrated from Imam Aḥmad that the Prophet ﷺ had the right to execute for other reasons than these three which are in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, and no other person has that right. It is as if he was indicating that he ﷺ had the right to punish by execution if he thought that there was benefit in that, because he ﷺ was protected from going too far and from acting unjustly. As for others, no one else has that right because no one else is secure from being led to go too far by his own erroneous opinions and desires. Abū Dāwūd said, "I heard Aḥmad being asked about the hadith of Abū Bakr, 'That does not belong to anyone after the Prophet ﷺ.' He said, 'Abū Bakr did not have the right to kill any man except for one of three reasons [as is mentioned in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd], but the Prophet ﷺ had the right to have someone executed.'" The hadith of Abū Bakr to which he referred was that a man spoke with Abū Bakr and was coarse and rude to him. Abū Barzah said to him, "Shall I kill him, Khalifah of the Messenger of Allah?" Abū Bakr said, "That does not belong to anyone after the Prophet ﷺ."[71]

In this way the hadith commanding the killing of this Copt is explained. Also in this way the hadith commanding the killing of the thief is explained, if it is authentic, because in it there is that the Prophet ﷺ commanded that he be killed the first time [he stole], but they asked him repeatedly about that and so he amputated [his hand]. Then he [the thief] did that four times while he [the Prophet ﷺ] continued to say that he should be killed and they kept asking him about that and he would order amputation until his four limbs [both hands and feet] were amputated, then later he was executed for the fifth theft, and Allah knows best.

1 *Thayyib* "the mature person" is someone who is or has been married and consummated the marriage. Trans.

2 At-Tirmidhī (2158), Ibn Mājah (2533), an-Nasā'ī (7:91-92)

3 An-Nasā'ī (7:103)

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (1694) and (1695)

5 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (13363), Ibn Ḥibbān (4428), al-Ḥākim (2:415), Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'* (2405) partially

6 i.e. "not mentioning a lot of what you have hidden that isn't relevant to his mission. If he exposed everything you would be disgraced."

7 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 15

8 An-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-kubrā* (6:333)

9 Al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (4:359)

10 We have retained the Arabic spelling Tawrah, since it is unknown what of the present-day Torah contains genuine revelation, and what of it is altered or is merely of human composition. Trans.

11 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 44-49

12 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (12008) and Abū Dāwūd (4450)

13 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 41

14 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 44

15 Muslim (1700)

16 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 41

17 Aḥmad (4:286)

18 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 42

19 Abū Dāwūd (4452)

20 Muslim (1690)

21 Aḥmad (1:93), and narrated by al-Bukhārī without mention of the flogging.

22 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 45

23 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 178

24 At-Tirmidhī (1399)

25 One copy of the text has al-Layth instead of al-Bittī. Trans.

26 Aḥmad (5:10)

27 People the Book who have agreed to live under Muslim governance with the payment of the *jizyah* poll-tax, a tax on trade

and the *kharāj* dues on agricultural land, while being exempt from *zakāh* and from going on *jihād*. Trans.

28 Al-Bukhārī (111)

29 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (18514), Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (250), ad-Dāraquṭnī (3:135) and al-Bayhaqī (8:30)

30 Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (251)

31 Ibn Ḥibbān (6559), al-Ḥākim (1:395) and al-Bayhaqī (4:89)

32 Al-Bukhārī (2413), Muslim (1672) and others

33 Ibn Abī Shaybah (9:297)

34 Al-Bukhārī (3017)

35 *Murtadd* is most often rendered as "apostate" but here "renegade" because the murtadd reneges on his *dīn*. Trans.

36 i.e. may not be spilt.

37 An-Nasā'ī (7:101,102)

38 Abū Dāwūd (4353)

39 The *āyah* mentioned is Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 33: "The reprisal against those who wage war on Allah and His Messenger, and go about the earth corrupting it, is that they should be killed or crucified, or have their alternate hands and feet cut off, or be banished from the land."

40 i.e. as an objection that Ibn Masʿūd's hadith cannot be decisive in this matter because there are many other reasons why a Muslim's blood may be spilt and they are not all mentioned in Ibn Masʿūd's hadith. Ed.

41 Abū Dāwūd (4462), at-Tirmidhī (1456) and others

42 Ibn Abī Shaybah (9:414)

43 Abū Dāwūd (4457), an-Nasā'ī (6:109), at-Tirmidhī (1362), Ibn Mājah (2607), and Aḥmad (4:295)

44 At-Tirmidhī (1460)

45 Aḥmad (1:269), Abū Dāwūd (4462), and Ibn Mājah (2564) in which the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever you find has had intercourse with an animal, kill him and kill the animal." The words are from at-Tirmidhī's version.

46 Abū Dāwūd (4775)

47 Al-Bukhārī (6780)

48 Abū Dāwūd (4410) and an-Nasā'ī (8:90,91)

49 Muslim (1853)

50 Muslim (1852)

51 It is not to be compensated by blood-money. Trans.

52 The Ḥarūriyyah are a group of the Khawarij. Trans.

53 Al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (2:158-9), Ahmad also narrated it (6:266)

54 Al-Bukhārī (2480)

55 Aḥmad (1:190), Abū Dāwūd (4772) and at-Tirmidhī (1421)

56 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (18557)

57 Aḥmad (5:326)

58 Al-Bukhārī (3007), Muslim (2494)

59 And therefore anyone else who commits the same crime, i.e. spying, would be killed. Ed.

60 Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (485)

61 The author is now responding to the objection that he raised about the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, that it is not

comprehensive about this issue because all of the reasons justifying the killing of a Muslim are not mentioned in it. Ed.

62 This means that the three reasons mentioned in Ibn Masʿūd's hadith represent three categories of reasons covering several other things some of which have just been discussed. Ed.

63 Such as a contract of marriage as in the case of the person who married his father's wife in the hadith mentioned earlier. Ed.

64 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 32

65 Muslim (18) and Aḥmad (3:22)

66 The *Khawārij* appeared some decades later. Trans.

67 Al-Bukhārī (5057), Muslim (1066)

68 Aḥmad (5:42)

69 Abū Yaʿlā

70 Muslim (2771)

71 Aḥmad (1:9) and Abū Dāwūd (4363)

الحديث الخامس عشر

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ؛ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا، أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ، وَ مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ؛ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ؛ فَلْيُكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Whoever has Īmān in Allah and the Last Day

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Let whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day speak well or remain silent. Let whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day generously honour his neighbour. Let whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day generously honour his guest.” Al-Bukhārī (6018) and Muslim (47) narrated it.

The two of them narrated this hadith by many routes from Abū Hurayrah, and in some wordings of it there is, “Let him not harm his neighbour,” and in some wordings, “Let him make the hospitality shown to his guest excellent,” and in some of them, “Let him join his ties of kinship,” in place of mention of the neighbour. They [al-Bukhārī and Muslim] also narrated it with the same sense from a hadith of Abū Shurayḥ al-Khuzāʿī from the Prophet ﷺ.

It has also been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in hadith of ʿĀ’ishah, Ibn Masʿūd, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Ibn ʿAbbās and other Companions ﷺ.

His words ﷺ, “Let whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day,” do such and such, shows that these are characteristics of *īmān*, and we have seen previously that actions are comprised under *īmān*. The Prophet ﷺ explained *īmān* as steadfastness (*ṣabr*) and liberal generosity. Al-Ḥasan said, “What is meant is being steadfast in [not performing] acts of disobedience and being liberally generous with [performing] acts of obedience.”

The actions of *īmān* are sometimes connected to rights due to Allah, such as discharge of the obligatory

duties and abandoning things which are forbidden, and a part of that is speaking well and being silent rather than saying anything else [than that which is good]. Sometimes they are connected to rights due to His slaves, such as honouring guests, and honouring neighbours, and restraining oneself from causing them any harm.

So these are three things which the *mu'min* is commanded to do, one of which is speaking well and being silent rather than saying anything else [than that which is good]. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of Aswad ibn Aṣram al-Muḥāribī that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, advise me!' He said, 'Do you have control of your tongue?' I said, 'What do I control if I do not have control of my tongue?' He said, "Do you have control over your hand?' I said, 'What do I control if I do not have control over my hand?' He said, 'Then only say with your tongue that which is a well recognised virtue, and only stretch out your hand towards good [purposes].'"[1]

It has been narrated that a straight tongue is one of the characteristics of *īmān*, as is in the *Musnad* from Anas ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave's *īmān* will

not be straight until his heart is straight, and his heart will not be straight until his tongue is straight."[2]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave will not reach the reality of *īmān* until he protects against his tongue."[3] AṭṬabarānī narrated a hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that the Prophet ﷺ said, "You will continue to be safe as long as you are silent. When you talk it will either be written for you or against you."[4] In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever is silent is saved."[5]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is that Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A man speaks a word about which he is not clear as to what it contains and by which he slips into the Fire [to a distance] which is further than that which is between the east and the west."[6]

Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A man speaks a word in which he sees no harm for which he falls for seventy autumns (years) in the Fire."[7]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is that Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A man speaks a word which earns the good pleasure of Allah and to

which he gives no thought and by which Allah raises him up in degrees, and a slave speaks a word which earns the wrath of Allah and to which he gives no thought and by which he falls in Jahannam."[8]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Sulaymān ibn Suḥaym from his mother that she said, "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, 'A man draws close to the Garden until there is only a cubit between him and it, and then he says a word so that he becomes further away from it than Ṣanʿā'.'"[9]

Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and an-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith of Bilāl ibn alḤārith that he said, "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, 'One of you speaks a word which earns the good pleasure of Allah and which he does not think will reach what it does, but Allah will write His good pleasure for him because of it until the day when he meets Him. One of you will speak a word which earns the wrath of Allah and which he does not think will reach what it does, but Allah will write His wrath against him until the day on which he meets Him.'"[10]

We have previously mentioned the hadith of Umm Ḥabībah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The speech of the son of Ādam is reckoned against him and not in his

favour except for commanding the well-recognised virtues, and forbidding the reprehensible vices, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ."

His words ﷺ, "let him speak well or remain silent," is a command to speak well, and to remain silent about anything besides it [i.e. that which is good]. This shows that there is no speech which should equally be spoken or kept unsaid, but on the contrary, either it is good so it is commanded to say it, or it is not good and it is commanded not to say it. The hadith of Muʿādh and of Umm Ḥabībah both show this.

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated the hadith of Muʿādh and in his wording there is that, "The Prophet ﷺ said to him, 'Muʿādh, may your mother be bereft of you! Do you say anything but that it is reckoned to be in your favour or against you?' Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ مَا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

'And the two recording angels are recording, sitting on the right and on the left. He does not utter a single word, without a watcher by him, pen in hand!'"[11] The right-acting first generations agreed unanimously that the one on the right records good actions and the one on the left records wrong actions, and that has also

been narrated in a *marfūᶜ* hadith in the hadith of Abū Umāmah with a weak chain of transmission.[12] In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the Prophet ﷺ there is, “When any of you prays he is holding intimate discourse with his Lord, and the angel is on his right.”[13] And it is narrated in a *marfūᶜ* hadith of Ḥudhayfah, “On his right is the writer of good actions.”[14]

There is disagreement as to whether everything that one says is recorded or whether only that for which there is reward or punishment is recorded, about which there are two famous positions. ᶜAlī ibn Abī Talhah said from Ibn ᶜAbbās, “Everything he says of good and bad, is recorded, to such an extent that his words such as, ‘I ate, I drank, I went, I came,’ are recorded until Thursday, when all his words and deeds are shown. Then everything for which there is reward or punishment is confirmed and the rest is discarded. That is His words, exalted is He:

يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ

‘Allah erases whatever He wills or endorses it. The Master Copy of the Book is with Him.’[15]”[16]

Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr said, “A man mounted his donkey and it tripped and fell with him, so he said, ‘May the donkey perish!’ The angel on the right side said, ‘It is not a good action which I should write,’ and the angel on the left side said, ‘It is not a wrong action which I should write.’ Allah revealed to the angel on the left, ‘Anything which the angel on the right leaves out, then you record it,’ so that, ‘May the donkey perish!’ was recorded as a wrong action.”[17]

The clear outward meaning of this is that whatever is not a good action is a wrong action, even if it is not going to be punished, for some wrong actions are not punished because they may be atoned for by the avoidance of great wrong actions, but, however, the person lost the time spent on them since it was spent in vain, so that he will be overtaken by regret and sorrow for that on the Day of Rising, which is a type of punishment.

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā’ī narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Any people who stand up from a gathering in which they did not remember Allah stand up from something like the corpse of a donkey and it will be a source of regret for them.”[18]

At-Tirmidhī narrated it and his wording was, “Any people who sit in a gathering in which they did not remember Allah and did not ask for blessings on their Prophet ﷺ then it will be regarded as a defect for them, so that if He wills He will punish them and if He wills He will forgive them.”[19] In a version of Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā’ī there is, “Whoever sits down and doesn’t remember Allah when he does so, it will be a defect for him with Allah. Whoever lies down for a while and doesn’t remember Allah during it, that will be a defect for him with Allah.” An-Nasā’ī added, “Whoever stands for some time and doesn’t remember Allah during it, that will be a defect for him with Allah.”[20] He also narrated from a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Any people who sit in an assembly in which they do not remember Allah, then it will be a source of regret for them on the Day of Rising even if they enter the Garden.”[21]

Mujāhid said, “If people assemble and then separate before remembering Allah, then they separate from something more malodorous than the stench of a corpse, and their gathering will bear witness of their forgetfulness against them. If people assemble and remember Allah before separating, then they separate

from something more fragrant than the scent of musk, and their gathering bears witness of their remembrance on their behalf."

One of the right-acting first generations said, "The moments of his life will be shown to the son of Ādam on the Day of Rising. Every moment in which he did not remember Allah will drive him to his wit's end in regret."

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿĀ'ishah , "Every moment which passes by the son of Ādam in which he does not remember Allah in a good way will be a cause of regret on the Day of Rising."[22]

From this we know that it is better to refrain from whatever speech is not good than to speak it, O Allah, except for that which necessity calls for and from which there is no escape. It has been narrated from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, "Beware of excess speech. That which will attain his needs is enough for a person." An-Nakhaʿī said, "People are destroyed because of extra unnecessary wealth and speech." Also, speaking a great deal without any need for it necessarily involves hardening of the heart, as is in at-Tirmidhī in the *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, "Do not speak a lot without remembrance of Allah, because a

great deal of talk without remembrance of Allah hardens the heart. The people who are furthest from Allah are [those with] hard hearts."[23]

ʿUmar ﷺ said, "Whoever speaks a lot makes a great many mistakes. Whoever makes a great many mistakes, commits a large number of wrong actions. Whoever commits a large number of wrong actions, then the Fire is a more fitting [abode] for him."[24] Al-ʿUqaylī narrated the hadith[25] of Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith with a weak chain of transmission.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAjlān said, "There are only four types of speech:[26] that you remember Allah, recite the Qur'ān, ask about knowledge and then you are informed about it, or that you speak about what concerns you in your worldly affairs."

A man said to Salmān, "Advise me!" He said, "Do not talk!" He said, "It is impossible for someone who lives among people not to talk." He said, "Then if you talk, speak about truth or be quiet."[27]

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ used to take hold of his tongue and say, "This has led me along some roads."[28]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "By Allah the One besides Whom there is no god, there is nothing on the earth that is more deserving of long imprisonment than the

tongue."[29] Wahb ibn Munabbih said, "Wise people agree unanimously that the main part of wisdom is silence."

Shumayṭ ibn ʿAjlān said, "Son of Ādam, as long as you are silent you are safe. If you speak then take your precautions; it is either for you or against you."[30]

This section would be lengthy if we treated it exhaustively.

What is meant is that the Prophet ﷺ commanded speeking about good or that one should be silent rather than say what is not good. Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbān narrated a hadith of al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib that a man said, "Messenger of Allah, teach me an action which will make me enter the Garden,..." mentioning the rest of the hadith in which was, "So feed the hungry, give the thirsty to drink, command the well-recognised virtues, forbid the reprehensible vices. If you are not able to do that, then restrain your tongue from [everything] except that which is good."[31]

So speech is not absolutely commanded and neither is silence, rather one must speak about good and not speak about things which are bad. The right-acting first generations very often used to praise remaining silent and not saying something evil and not saying

what does not concern one, because of the great difficulty in that for the human soul. Because of that people fall into it a great deal. They used to take pains with themselves and struggle with themselves to remain silent about what did not concern them.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, "Neither Ḥajj, *ribāṭ*[32] nor *jihād* is more difficult than restraining the tongue. If you were to rise in the morning concerned with your tongue, you would rise in great worry."

Ibn al-Mubārak was asked about the words of Luqmān to his son, "If speech is silver then silence is golden," and he said, "It means that if talk of obedience to Allah is silver, then silence on the disobedience of Allah is golden." This refers to the fact that restraining oneself from acts of disobedience is better than acts of obedience, but we have previously spoken at length about this.

They discussed among themselves in the company of al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, "Which is better: silence or speech?" Some said that silence is better, and al-Aḥnaf said, "Speech is better, because the benefit of silence goes no further than the silent one, but good speech benefits whoever hears it."[33]

One of the men of knowledge said in the presence of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd alʿAzīz ﷺ "The one who is silent based on knowledge[34] is just as the one who speaks from knowledge." ʿUmar said, "I hope that, of the two, the one who speaks from knowledge is the better of the two in his state on the Day of Rising, because his benefit is for other people, but this other, his silence is only for himself." So he said to him, "Amīr al-Mu'minīn, but how about the trials of speech?" And at that ʿUmar wept copiously.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz gave an address one day and people softened, so he stopped his address. Someone said to him, "If only you would complete what you were saying, we hope that Allah would bring benefit by means of it." ʿUmar said, "Words are a trial, and it is more fitting for *mu'minūn* to act than to talk."

A long time ago I saw the Amīr al-Mu'minīn ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ﷺ in a dream and I heard him talking about this issue. I think that I communicated with him about it. I understood from what he said that speaking well is better than silence, and that during our talk there was some mention of Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, and that ʿUmar said that to him. It has been narrated that Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik said, "Silence is the sleep of the intellect, and speech is its wakefulness, and no state is complete without another state," meaning that there is no avoiding either silence or speech.

How wonderful is that which ʿUbaydullāh ibn Abī Jaʿfar said, and he was the *faqīh* of the people of Egypt in his time and a wise man, "When someone speaks in a gathering and what he says makes him proud, let him stay silent. If he is silent and his silence makes him proud, let him speak." This is beautiful, for whoever is like that, then his speech and his silence are in opposition to his desires and his self-conceit. Whoever is like this is more worthy of Allah's grace towards him and His directing him aright in his speech and his silence, because his speech and his silence are for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Among the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan ﷺ from the Prophet ﷺ in that which he related from his Lord ﷻ[35] there is that He said, “The sign of purity is that the slave’s heart is attached to Me. When he is like that he does not forget Me in any state. When he is like that I bestow on him the gift of being occupied with Me so that he will not forget Me, and when he does forget Me I stir his heart. Then if he talks, he talks for My sake. If he is silent, he is silent for My sake. That is the one to whom help comes from Me.” Ibrāhīm ibn al-Junayd narrated it.

In every state, clinging to silence totally and believing that it is an act of drawing closer [to Allah], either completely on its own or as an act of worship, such as Ḥajj, *iʿtikāf*[36] and fasting, is forbidden. It is narrated in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that, “The Prophet ﷺ forbade the fasts of silence.” Al-Ismāʿīlī narrated a hadith of ʿAlī ﷺ that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade me from silence in *iʿtikāf*.” In the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd there is a hadith of ʿAlī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There is to be no silence from day to night.”[37] Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ said to a woman who was performing the Ḥajj without speaking, “This is not permitted. This is one of the acts

of the age of ignorance."[38] It is narrated of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-ʻAbidin that he said, "The fast of silence is forbidden."

The second thing which the Prophet ﷺ commanded the *mu'minūn* in this hadith is that they should generously honour neighbours. In some versions there is prohibition of harming neighbours. Harming neighbours is forbidden, because causing anyone harm without right is forbidden, but with respect to neighbours it is more strenuously forbidden. In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Ibn Masʿūd from the Prophet ﷺ that he was asked, "Which is the most serious wrong action?" He said, "That you should regard another as being like [or a partner of] Allah while He created you." Someone said, "Then after that what?" He said, "That you should kill your child out of fear that he will eat with you." Someone said, "Then after that what?" He said, "That you should commit adultery with your neighbour's wife."[39] In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad there is from al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, 'What do you say about adultery?' They answered, 'It is forbidden; Allah and His Messenger have forbidden it and so it is forbidden until the Day of Rising.' The

Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘That a man should commit adultery with ten women will be easier on him [as punishment in the *ākhirah*] than if he commits adultery with his neighbour’s wife.’ He asked, ‘What do you say about theft?’ They answered, ‘Allah and His Messenger have forbidden it and so it is forbidden.’ He said, ‘That a man should steal from ten houses will be lighter for him than if he steals from his neighbour’s house.’”[40]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from Abū Shurayḥ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe!” Someone said, “Who? Messenger of Allah.” He said, “He whose neighbour is not safe from calamity at his hands.” Imam Aḥmad and others narrated it from a hadith of Abū Hurayrah.[41]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever’s neighbour is not safe from calamity at his hands will not enter the Garden.”[42]

Imam Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim narrated, also from a hadith of Abū Hurayrah, that he said, “Someone said, ‘Messenger of Allah, such and such a woman prays at night, and fasts in the day-time, but in her tongue

there is some sharpness with which she harms her neighbour." He said, "There is no good in her. She is in the Fire." Someone said to him, "Such and such [another] woman prays [only] the obligatory prayers, and she fasts [only] Ramaḍān, and she gives *ṣadaqah* with portions of cottage cheese, and she has nothing but that, but she does not harm anyone." He said, "She is in the Garden." The wording of Imam Aḥmad is, "And she does not harm her neighbour with her tongue."[43]

Al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith that Abū Juḥayfah said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ complaining of his neighbour, so he said to him, 'Throw your goods in the street.' So people passed by and would curse him. He came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Messenger of Allah, what have I not met with from people!' He asked, 'What have you met with from them?' He answered, 'They are cursing me.' He said, 'Allah cursed you before people did.' He said, 'Messenger of Allah, I will not repeat it.'"[44] Abū Dāwūd narrated it with the same meaning in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah, but he did not mention, "Allah cursed you before people did." Al-Kharā'iṭī narrated a hadith that Umm Salamah said, "A sheep belonging to our neighbour

came in and took a small loaf of bread, stood up and took hold of it between the jawbones. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'There is no [such thing as a] little harm to the neighbour[45].'"[46]

As for honouring neighbours and treating them well, that is commanded. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَاعْبُدُواْ اللَّهَ وَلاَ تُشْرِكُواْ بِهِ شَيْئاً وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالاً فَخُوراً

"Worship Allah and do not attribute partners to Him. Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbours who are related to you and neighbours who are not related to you, and to your companions and travellers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful."[47]
In this *āyah*, Allah, exalted is He, mentions together His rights over the slave, and also the slaves' rights over the slave. He made five types of slaves whom He commands us to treat well:

First, that one to whom one is related, specifically mentioning parents because they are distinguished from other relatives in ways they [relatives] do not

have in common with them. For indeed, they are the cause of the child's existence and they have the right to the upbringing [of the child] and teaching him courtesy, etc.

Second, those who are weak and in need of kind treatment of whom there are two types: those who are in need because of the weakness of their bodies, i.e. orphans, and those who are in need because of their impoverishment, i.e. the bereft.

Third, those who have a right because of their proximity and the interactions [between them], and He categorised them as three types: al-jāri dhi'lqurbā, *al-jāri'l-junubi and aṣ-ṣāḥibi bi'l-janbi.*[48]

The commentators disagree on the interpretation of that [āyah]. Some of them said, *"al-jāri dhi'l-qurbā* is the neighbour who is related, and *al-jāri'l-junubi* is the unrelated person." Some of them consider wives as being included in *al-jāri dhi'l-qurbā*, but some include them among *al-jāri'l-junubi.* Some include the travelling companion among *al-jāri'l-junubi.* It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication, "I seek refuge with you from an evil neighbour to my residence, for the neighbour in the desert changes [because they were nomads],"[49].

Some of them said, "*Al-jāri dhi'l-qurbā* is the Muslim neighbour, and *al-jāri'l-junubi* is the *kāfir* [neighbour]." In the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār there is a *marfūʿ* hadith of Jābir, "There are three types of neighbour: the neighbour who has one right and he is the least of the neighbours in terms of rights; the neighbour who has two rights; and the neighbour who has three rights who is the best of neighbours in terms of rights. As for the one who has one right, it is the neighbour who associates a partner [with Allah, of the People of the Book] who is unrelated; he has the right due to a neighbour. As for the one who has two rights, it is the Muslim neighbour who has the right due to him because he is a Muslim and the right due to a neighbour. As for the one who has three rights, it is the Muslim who is a relative for he has a right due to him for his Islam, a right due to him for his being a neighbour, and a right due to him because he is a relative."[50] This hadith has been narrated in other ways some of which have connected chains of transmission and some are *mursal*, but none of them are free from discussion [of the merits of their chains of transmission].

Some say, "*Al-jāri dhi'l-qurbā* is the closely adjoining neighbour and *al-jāri'l-junubi* is the more remote neighbour."

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is that ʿĀ'ishah ﵂ said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, I have two neighbours; to which of them should I give a gift?' He answered, 'To the one whose door is closest to you.'"[51]

A party of the right-acting first generations said, "The furthest limit of being a neighbour is forty houses," and some said, "A circle of forty houses on every side."

Among the *mursal* hadith of az-Zuhrī there is that, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ complaining about one of his neighbours, so the Prophet ﷺ ordered one of his Companions to announce, 'Listen! Forty houses are neighbours.'" Az-Zuhrī said, "Forty like this, forty like this, forty like this, and forty like this,"[52] meaning in front of him, behind him, to his right, and to his left.

Imam Aḥmad was asked about someone cooking an amount in a hospice for travellers, with thirty or forty other people in the hospice, meaning that they resided in the building with him. He said, "He begins with himself and with whomever he is responsible for, and then if there is any surplus left over he must give it to

the one who is closest to him. How would it be possible for him to give all of them?" Someone said to him, "Perhaps the one who is his neighbour might think little of that amount, and he has no place for it?" He thought that one should not send it to him.

As for *aṣ-ṣāḥibi bi'l-junubi*, a party explained it as referring to wives, and a party, among whom was Ibn ʿAbbās, explained it as referring to travelling companions. They didn't mean to exclude the regular companion one has when one is resident, but what they meant was that if the company one keeps when travelling is covered [by this *āyah*] then the company one keeps continually while resident has more right. For this reason Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said, "It refers to right-acting companions." Zayd ibn Aslam said, "It is the one who sits with you when you are resident, and who accompanies you when you travel." Ibn Zayd said, "It is the man who comes to you and makes your acquaintance seeking to gain some benefit from you." There is in the *Musnad* and at-Tirmidhī from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best companion with Allah is the one who is best to his companion, and the best neighbours with Allah are those who are best to their neighbours."[53]

Fourth, the one who alights with someone but is not resident with him, and this is the *ibn as-sabīl*, meaning the traveller when he goes to another city. Some of them explained it as meaning guests, meaning the traveller when he alights as someone's guest.

Fifth, slaves. The Prophet ﷺ advised us about them a great deal and commanded that they are treated well, and it has been narrated that the last things about which he gave advice on his death-bed ﷺ were "The prayer and slaves[54]."[55] Some of the right-acting first generations included in this *āyah*, "That which a person owns of animals and livestock."

Let us return to the explanation of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah about honouring neighbours. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿĀ'ishah and Ibn ʿUmar رضي الله عنهم that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Jibrīl continued to advise me with respect to the neighbour so much so that I thought that he would make him inherit."[56]

One of the types of good treatment of neighbours is to share with them when they are in need. In the *Musnad* there is from ʿUmar رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* does not eat his fill without his neighbour."[57] Al-Ḥākim narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنهما that the Prophet ﷺ said, "He is not a

mu'min who eats his fill while his neighbour is hungry."[58] In another version from Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The one who spends the night with a full belly while his neighbour is lean from hunger does not have *īmān*."[59]

In the *Musnad* there is from ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The first set of two disputants on the Day of Rising will be two neighbours."[60]

In the *Kitāb al-adab* by al-Bukhārī there is from Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "How many a neighbour will be attached to his neighbour on the Day of Rising, saying, 'My Lord, this one closed his door on me, and he refused [me] his good treatment.'"

Al-Kharā'iṭī and others narrated with a weak chain of transmission a hadith of ʿAṭā' al-Khurasānī from ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather from the Prophet ﷺ, "Whoever locks his door against his neighbour fearing for his family and his property, then that one is not a *mu'min*. He is not a *mu'min* whose neighbour is not safe from calamities at his hand. Do you know what a neighbour's right is? It is that when he seeks your help, you should help him, and when he asks you for a loan, you should lend him, and that when he is in need, you should confer

[something] on him, and when he is sick you should visit him, when something good happens to him, you should congratulate him, and when something unfortunate happens to him, you should console him and exhort him to be patient, and when he dies, you must follow his funeral cortege. You should not build some tall building that towers over him and obstructs the breeze without his permission. Nor should you cause him harm by the odour of your cooking unless you send him a portion of it. If you buy fruits, send some to him as a gift. If you don't do that, then bring them in [to your house] secretly, and do not let your child go out with them and enrage his child with them [because he doesn't have them]."[61]

Ascribing this as a *marfūʿ* hadith is rejected, and it is very likely that it is a commentary by ʿAṭāʾ al-Khurasānī.

It has also been narrated from ʿAṭāʾ from al-Ḥasan from Jābir as a *marfūʿ* hadith that, "The least of the neighbour's rights is that you do not bother your neighbour with the aroma of your cooking unless you ladle some of it out for him."[62]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is that Abū Dharr said, "My close friend ﷺ advised me, 'When you cook a soup

you should add plenty of water to it, then look to your neighbours' families, and pour them some as a kindness." There is in another version that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Abū Dharr, when you cook a broth, then add plenty of water to it, and strengthen your relations with your neighbours."[63]

There is in the *Musnad* and at-Tirmidhī from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn alʿĀṣ that he slaughtered a sheep [or goat] and said three times, "Have you given some of it as a gift to our Jewish neighbour?" Then he said, "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, 'Jibrīl continued to advise me with respect to the neighbour so much so that I thought that he would make him inherit.'"[64]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not prevent your neighbour fixing a piece of wood in his wall." Then Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said, "How is that I think you are averse to it? By Allah, I will cast it between your shoulders."[65]

The position of Imam Aḥmad is that a neighbour is required to make it possible for his neighbour to fix a piece of wood in his [shared] wall if he needs to do that and it doesn't cause damage to his wall, because of this authentic hadith. The clear outward meaning of

it is that he must share the surplus of what he has, if it doesn't cause him harm, if he knows of the other's need. Al-Marwazī said, "I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal], 'I hear a beggar on the street saying, "I am hungry."' He said, 'He might be telling the truth and he might be lying.' I said, 'What if I have a neighbour and I know that he is hungry?' He said, 'You should share with him.' I said, 'What if my food consists only of two small loaves?' He said, 'Feed him something.' Then he said, 'What has been narrated in the hadith only refers to the neighbour.'"

Al-Marwazi said, "I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh, 'Are the wealthy obliged to share?' He said, 'If people place something on top of another thing [accumulate wealth], how could it not be obligatory on them [to share]?' I said, 'If a man has two shirts' or I said, 'two long outer garments, must he share?' He said, 'If he has, it needs to be surplus.'"

This is a clear statement from him on the obligatory nature of sharing from what is surplus, and he did not particularly single out neighbours, but his first statement requires that it is specific to the neighbour.

He said, in the narration of Ibn Hāni', concerning lying beggars, "We prefer that they should tell the truth. We cannot but share with them,"[66] and this shows that it is obligatory to share with the hungry, neighbours or others. In the *ṣaḥīḥ* there is from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and give release to those who are worried."[67]

There is in the *Musnad* and in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim from Ibn ʿUmar رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any people possessing great courtyards among whom a man rises in the morning hungry, then the protection of Allah ﷻ is free of them."[68]

The position of both Aḥmad and Mālik is that a neighbour is prevented from utilising his own property in such a manner as to injure his neighbour. Both of them regarded it as obligatory to withhold harm from one's neighbour by preventing some benefit [for oneself] which would harm him, even if the one who benefits only does so within the realms of his own property. Aḥmad regarded it as obligatory that one should spend on a neighbour what he is in need of and which does not cause harm to oneself by spending it. Higher than both of these is that one patiently endures distress caused one by one's neighbour and not requite

it with harm. Al-Ḥasan said, “Good neighbourliness is not the act of restraining harm, but good neighbourliness is [patient] endurance of harm.” It is narrated from a hadith of Abū Dharr which he attributed [to the Prophet ﷺ], that he said, “Allah loves a man who has a neighbour who causes him trouble but who is patient with that trouble until death or travel elsewhere parts them.” Imam Aḥmad narrated it.

Among the *mursal* hadith of Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Habli, there is that, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ complaining of his neighbour, and the Prophet ﷺ said to him, ‘Withhold your harm from him and be patient with the harm he causes you, for death is sufficient as that which causes separation.” Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated it.[69]

The third thing with which the Prophet ﷺ commanded the *mu’minūn* is: to generously honour the guest, by which is meant excelling in showing him hospitality. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Abū Shurayḥ ﷺ that he said, “My two eyes saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and my two ears heard him when he said it, ‘Whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day should generously honour his guest with his

jā'izah [devoted attention to his every need].' They said, 'What is his *jā'izah*?' He said, '[For] a day and a night.' He said, 'Hospitality is for three days, and whatever is after that is an act of *ṣadaqah*.'"[70]

Muslim narrated also from a hadith of Abū Shurayḥ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Hospitality is for three days. His devoted attention to his every need is for a day and a night. Whatever he spends on him after that [the three days] is an act of *ṣadaqah*. It is not permitted for him to take up residence with him so long that he causes him to fall into wrong action." They said, "Messenger of Allah, how could he cause him to fall into wrong action?" He said, "If he resides with him while he has nothing with which to show him hospitality."

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudri رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, then let him generously honour his guest," saying it three times. They said, "What is generous honouring of the guest, Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Three days. Then however long he sits after that is an act of *ṣadaqah*."[71]

There is in these hadith that the devoted attention to every need of the guest is for a day and a night and

that hospitality is three days, and so he distinguished between devoted attention to his every need and hospitality, and he stressed the devoted attention to his every need, and other hadith have been narrated stressing it. Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of al-Miqdām ibn Maʿdīkarib that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A night for the guest is a duty on every Muslim. Whoever is in his courtyard in the morning, then it is a debt upon him which if he wishes he will demand [the payment of] and if he wishes he will abandon."[72] Ibn Mājah narrated it and his wording was, "The night of the guest is a duty on every Muslim."[73]

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd also narrated a hadith of al-Miqdām from the Prophet ﷺ, "If a man grants hospitality to people, but the guest becomes denied [his rightful hospitality], then every Muslim is obliged to help him until he takes his night's satisfaction from his crops and his wealth."[74]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that he said, "We said, 'Messenger of Allah, you send us out and sometimes we alight with people who do not extend us hospitality. What do you think?' So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to us, 'If you alight with some people and they give orders that you should

have what is fitting for guests, then accept it. If they don't do [that], then take from them the guests' rights which are appropriate for them.'"[75]

Imam Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim narrated from a hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If a guest alights among a people but he becomes forbidden [his rights as a guest] then he may take the measure of that [which he is due] in hospitality, and there is nothing against him."[76] ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said, "Whoever does not grant hospitality is not of Muḥammad ﷺ nor of Ibrāhīm ﷺ."

ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Jaz' said, "Whoever does not honour his guest generously, is not of Muḥammad ﷺ nor of Ibrāhīm ﷺ."

Abū Hurayrah alighted among some people and asked them to provide him hospitality and they didn't show him hospitality, so he withdrew and alighted [elsewhere]. He invited them to his meal and they didn't accept, so he said to them, "You do not show hospitality to the guest and you do not accept invitations; you have nothing of Islam!" A man among them recognised him and said to him, "Alight [and stay with me], may Allah protect you." He said, "This

is worse and worse. You only show hospitality to those you recognise!"

A similar case to this has been narrated from Abū'd-Dardā' except that he said to them, "You are not on the *dīn* except in a manner such as this," and he pointed to the fringe of his garment.

These texts show that it is obligatory to show hospitality for a day and a night, and that is the position of al-Layth and Aḥmad. Aḥmad said, "He has the right to demand it if they refuse, because it is an obligatory right." But there are two different narrations from him as to whether he may take it by force with his own hand from his wealth if he refuses him, or whether he should take the matter to the ruler.

Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh said, "The guest's night is obligatory, but he has not the right to take his hospitality from them by force, unless he is travelling in the general interests of the Muslims and not purely for his own interest."

Al-Layth ibn Saʿd said, "If the guest alights with a slave, he should show him hospitality from the property he has in his hands, and the guest should eat even if he doesn't know that his owner has given permission, because hospitality is an obligatory duty."

That is also deduced by analogy from some words of Aḥmad, because he stated that it is permissible to accept the invitation of a slave who has been given permission to trade. It has been narrated that a large group of the Companions accepted the invitations of slaves, and that has also been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ. So if it is permitted that he invite people to his food, and it is permitted to accept his invitation, then it is more important that he show hospitality to someone who alights with him.

Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī and others rejected [that it is permissible to accept] the invitation of the slave who has permission [to trade], without his owner's permission. ʿAlī ibn Saʿīd narrated from Aḥmad something which shows that the obligation of showing hospitality is particularly for warriors among those whom they pass by, for three days, but his well-known stance is the former that it is obligatory to show hospitality to every guest who alights among a people.

There is disagreement about his words as to whether it is obligatory on the people of cities and towns or only on town-dwellers and those who live along roadways along which travellers pass. There are two narrations reported of him textually.

It is stated textually of him that it is obligatory for Muslims and *kuffār* [of the people of the Book], but many of his companions chose [the position] that the obligatory nature of it is with respect to Muslims, just as expenditure on relatives who have different religions is not obligatory according to one of two narrations from him.

As for the two other days, the second and the third, they are the completion of hospitality. That which is textually transmitted from Aḥmad is that only the first *jā'izah* day is obligatory, and he said, "There is a distinction between *jā'izah* and hospitality, and the *jā'izah* is more firmly established." Some of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs], among them Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Ibn Abī Mūsā and al-Āmidī, regard the three days of hospitality as obligatory, and that whatever is more than three days is an act of *ṣadaqah*. Some people have the opinion that the hospitality is the three days after the first day and night, which Aḥmad refuted with his words ﷺ, "'Hospitality is three days, and whatever is more than that is an act of *ṣadaqah*,' for if it were as this one thinks it would have been 'four days'." I say that something similar to this is in His words, exalted is He:

قُلْ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَاداً ... وَبَارَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاء لِّلسَّائِلِينَ

"Say: 'Do you reject Him who created the earth in two days and make others equal to Him? ... and He blessed it and measured out its nourishment in it, laid out for those who seek it – all in four days,'"[77] which means that "in the completion of the four days."[78]

This hadith by which Aḥmad draws a proof has previously been given as a hadith of Abū Shurayḥ. Al-Bukhārī narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day then let him make the entertainment of his guest excellent." Someone said, "Messenger of Allah, what is the entertainment of the guest?" He said, "Three [days], then what is over that is an act of *ṣadaqah*."

Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh said, "He must take on himself for one day and night the provision of the best food which he and his family eat, then for the other days of the three [days of hospitality] he should feed him from his food [which he ordinarily eats]," but there are other views on this, of which we will mention the hadith of Sulaymān going out of one's

way for the sake of the guest. Ashhab narrated from Mālik that he said, “His devoted attention to his guest’s every need (*jā’izah*) is for a day and a night in which he should be generous to him, present him with gifts, and pay particular attention to him by day and night, and the three days are [ordinary] hospitality.” Ibn ʿUmar used to refuse to eat from the property of the one with whom he had alighted after three days, and he would order [his slaves or servants] to spend on him from his [own] money.[79] The householder has the right to tell the guest to depart after three days because he has discharged the duty that he had, and Imam Aḥmad has done that ﷺ.

His words ﷺ “It is not permitted for him to take up residence with him so long that he causes him difficulty,” means residing with him until he causes him constriction. However, whether this is during the three days or after them is the question? As for with respect to that which is not a duty [the days after the first day], there is no doubt that it is forbidden [to cause the host constriction]. As for that which is an obligation, i.e. the day and the night, then the argument is based on the discussion as to whether hospitality is required of someone who has nothing or

whether it is only obligatory on someone who can find something with which to show hospitality. The most obvious thing is that it is only an obligation on someone who can find something with which to show hospitality, and that is the position of the people of hadith, among them Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh, and that it is not permitted for a guest to ask for hospitality from someone who is unable show him hospitality. It is narrated in a hadith of Salmān that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade us to impose on ourselves what we don't have for the sake of the guest."[80] Therefore, if the host is forbidden to impose a task on himself for his guest beyond his capacity, it shows that it is only obligatory on him to share what he actually has with the guest, and thus if he has nothing extra he is not required to give the guest anything. However, if he prefers his guest over himself as did the Anṣārī about whom was revealed:

وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَى أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

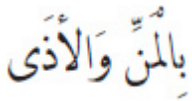
"and they prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are in want,"[81] then that is the station of

eminence and excellence (*iḥsān*), but it is not obligatory.

If the guests knows that they will only provide him hospitality with their own food and their children's food, and that the children will suffer harm from that, then it is unacceptable for him to ask hospitality from them at that time, acting in according with his words ﷺ "It is not permitted for him to take up residence with him so long that he causes him difficulty."[82]

Also, hospitality is an obligatory expenditure, and so it is only obligatory on those who have more food than they need for themselves and their dependants, just as is the case with expenditure on relatives [beyond the immediate family] and the *zakāh al-fiṭr*. Al-Khaṭṭābī denied the explanation of the words "causes him to commit a wrong action" as meaning that he resides with him while he [the host] has nothing with which to entertain him, and he said, "I think that it is wrong. How can he become guilty of a wrong action when he does not have that with which to provide entertainment and can find no way to get it? The imposition of the duty is only according to the measure of the capability." He said, "The meaning of the hadith is that it is disapproved for him to stay with

him after three days so that his heart will not be troubled with his situation and thus his act of *ṣadaqah* [by allowing the guest to stay longer] will be



in the way of 'demands for gratitude or insulting words'[83] so that his reward is invalidated." However, there are other views on this which he says, because the interpretation which he rejects is authentically established in a hadith. The reality of it is that if he stays with him and he has nothing with which to show him hospitality, then it is likely that his invitation will constrict his breast and cause him difficulty thus driving him to that by which he will become guilty of a wrong action in word or in deed. It does not mean that he becomes guilty of a wrong action because he gives up hospitality since he cannot do it, and Allah knows best.

1 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (818)

2 Aḥmad (3:198)

3 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (964)

4 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (20:137)

5 Aḥmad (2:159), also narrated by at-Tirmidhī, ad-Dārimī and others

6 Al-Bukhārī (6477), Muslim (2988)

7 Aḥmad (2:355), at-Tirmidhī (2314)

8 Al-Bukhārī (6478)

9 Aḥmad (4:64)

10 Aḥmad (3:469), at-Tirmidhī (2319), Ibn Mājah (3969)

11 Sūrah Qāf: 17-18

12 The hadith has been narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (7765) and the words are: “The companion [angel] of the right side is the supervisor of the companion [angel] of the left side; so when he does a right action he [the angel of the right side] confirms it; but when he does a wrong action, the companion of the right side says to him [the angel on the left], ‘wait six hours’. Then if he seeks forgiveness, it is not written against him; otherwise it is confirmed against him as a bad deed.” Ed.

13 Al-Bukhārī (416)

14 Ibn Abī Shaybah (2:364)

15 Sūrat ar-Raʿd: 39

16 Ibn Kathīr mentions this in his *tafsīr* (7:377)

17 Ibn Abī Shaybah (13:575)

18 Abū Dāwūd (4855), an-Nasā’ī in *al-Kubrā* (6:107-8), Aḥmad (2:494)

19 At-Tirmidhī (3380)

20 An-Nasā’ī narrated this in *ʿAmal al-Yawm wa’l-Laylah* (404)

21 An-Nasā’ī narrated this in *ʿAmal al-Yawm wa’l-Laylah* (409)

22 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (8316)

23 At-Tirmidhī (2411)

24 Al-Quḍā'ī narrated it in the *Musnad ash-Shihāb* (374)

25 He narrated it in *aḍ-uʿafā'* (3:384)

26 i.e. what can be classed as good speech. Ed.

27 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated in *aṣ-Ṣamt* (44)

28 Mālik (2:988)

29 Ibn Ḥibbān in *Rawḍat al-ʿuqalā'*

30 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:129)

31 Aḥmad (4:299)

32 *Ribāṭ:* serving in frontier fortresses in defence of the Muslims. The word has a wide range of meanings including: remaining in the front row of the battle, and by a famous hadith it includes waiting in the mosque after one prayer until the time of another. Trans.

33 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *aṣ-Ṣamt* (712)

34 i.e. his silence is based on his knowledge of its benefits and rewards. Ed.

35 i.e. in a hadith *qudsī* which is a hadith in which the Prophet cites Allah. Ed.

36 *I ʿtikāf*: retreat in the mosque for intense devotion, particularly in the last ten days of Ramaḍān. Trans.

37 Abū Dāwūd (2873)

38 Al-Bukhārī (3834)

39 Al-Bukhārī (4477), Muslim (86)

40 Aḥmad (6:8)

41 Aḥmad (2:288-336)

42 Muslim (46)

43 Aḥmad (2:440), al-Ḥākim (4:166)

44 Al-Ḥākim (4:166)

45 i.e. no form or amount of harm should be considered insignificant. Ed.

46 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*.

47 Sūrat an-Nisā': 36

48 Translated above as "neighbours who are related to you and neighbours who are not related to you, and to your companions". Trans.

49 Aḥmad (2:346) and al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (117)

50 Al-Bazzār (1896)

51 Al-Bukhārī (2259)

52 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī

53 Aḥmad (2:167) and at-Tirmidhī (1944)

54 Literally: that which your right hands own. Trans.

55 Aḥmad (3:17) and others

56 Al-Bukhārī (6014-5), Muslim (2624-5)

57 Aḥmad (1:55)

58 Al-Ḥākim (4:167)

59 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (2:637)

60 Aḥmad (4:151)

61 Al-Kharā'iṭī in *Makārim al-akhlāq* (104)

62 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (3591) and Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil*

63 Muslim (2625)

64 Aḥmad (2:160), at-Tirmidhī (1943) and others.

65 Al-Bukhārī (2463), Muslim (1609)

66 i.e. we will share with them anyway because that is what we are commanded to do, there is no need for them to lie to convince us. Ed.

67 Al-Bukhārī (3046)

68 Aḥmad (2:33), al-Ḥākim (2:11)

69 *Makārim al-akhlāq*.

70 Al-Bukhārī (6019), Muslim (48)

71 Aḥmad (3:76)

72 Abū Dāwūd (3750)

73 Ibn Mājah (3677)

74 Aḥmad (4:131), Abū Dāwūd (3751)

75 Al-Bukhārī (2461, 2137), Muslim (1727)

76 Aḥmad (2:380), al-Ḥākim (4:132)

77 Sūrat Fuṣṣilat: 9-10

78 i.e. the total is four days not two days plus another four totalling six. Ed.

79 Ibn Abī Shaybah (12:478)

80 Aḥmad (5:441)

81 Sūrat al-Ḥashr: 9

82 Al-Bukhārī (6135), Muslim (48)

83 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 263

الحديث السادس عشر

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ أَنَّ رَجُلاً قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ: أَوْصِنِي، قَالَ: ﴿لا تَغْضَبْ﴾، فَرَدَّدَ مِرَارًا، قَالَ: ﴿لا تَغْضَبْ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

Anger

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that, “A man said to the Prophet ﷺ ‘Advise me.’ He said, ‘Do not become angry,’ and repeated it several times, saying, ‘Do not become angry’.” Al-Bukhārī (6116) narrated it.

Al-Bukhārī narrated this hadith by way of Abū Ḥaṣīn al-Asadī from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ but Muslim did not narrate it because al-Aʿmash narrated it from Abū Ṣāliḥ. There were disagreements from him in his chain of transmission, and so some said that it was from him from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah, such as the position of Abū Ḥaṣīn. Some said that it was from him from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, and according to Yaḥyā Ibn Maʿīn this is the authentic one. Some said that it was from him from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah and Abū Saʿīd. Some said that it was from him from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah or Jābir. Some said that it was from him from Abū Ṣāliḥ from an unnamed man of the Companions.

At-Tirmidhī narrated this hadith also by way of Abū Haṣīn, and his wording is, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, teach me something but not too much so that I might commit it to memory.’ He said, ‘Do not become angry.’ Then he repeated that several times and each time he would say, ‘Do not become angry.’”[1] In another narration from someone other than at-Tirmidhī there is that he said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, show me an action

which will enter me in the Garden but do not tell me too much.' He said, 'Do not become angry.'"

This man asked the Prophet ﷺ to advise him with comprehensive and concise advice containing all the elements of good so that he could memorise it from him for fear that he would not remember it if it was too much, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ advised him not to become angry. Then he repeated this question several times and the Prophet ﷺ repeated this answer, which shows that anger comprises [many] evils and that guarding against it comprises [many] good things.

It is likely that this man who asked the Prophet ﷺ was Abū'd-Dardā', because aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it from a hadith of a Abū'd-Dardā'. He said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, show me an action that will enter me into the Garden.' He said, 'Do not become angry and the Garden is yours.'"[2]

Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays narrated from his uncle Jāriyah ibn Qudāmah that, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, say something to me and make it little so that I can grasp it.' He said, 'Do not become angry.' So he repeated it to him several times and each time he said, 'Do not become angry.'" Imam Aḥmad narrated it, and in one of his narrations of it there is that Jāriyah ibn

Qudāmah said, “I asked the Prophet ﷺ ...” and he mentioned the rest of it.[3]

This gives a strong impression that the questioner was Jāriyah ibn Qudāmah, but Imam Aḥmad mentioned from Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān that he said, “Like this Hāshim said,” meaning that Hāshim mentioned in the hadith that Jāriyah asked the Prophet ﷺ. Yaḥyā said, “They say that he did not reach the Prophet ﷺ and al-ʿIjlī and others say that, ‘He was a Follower [*tābiʿī*] not a Companion.’”

Imam Aḥmad narrated from a hadith of az-Zuhrī from Ḥumayd ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān from a man among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, counsel me.’ He said, ‘Do not become angry.’” The man said, “I reflected when the Prophet ﷺ said what he said, and it struck me that anger comprises all evil.”[4] Mālik related it in the *Muwaṭṭa’* from az-Zuhrī from Ḥumayd as a *mursal* hadith.[5]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that he asked the Prophet ﷺ “What will keep me far away from the wrath of Allah?” He said, “Do not become angry.”[6]

The saying of the Companion, “I reflected when the Prophet ﷺ said what he said, and found that anger comprises all evil,” testifies to what we have mentioned that anger comprises all evil. Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad said, “Anger is the key to every evil.” Someone said to Ibn al-Mubārak, “Bring together good character for us in one phrase.” He said, “Giving up anger.”

It was in this way that Imam Aḥmad and Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh explained good character as giving up anger, and that has also been related as a *marfūʿ* hadith which Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī related in the *Kitāb aṣ-ṣalāh* in a hadith of Abū’l-ʿAlā ibn ash-Shikhkhīr, “That a man came to the Prophet ﷺ from in front of him and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, which action is best?’ He said, ‘Good character.’ Then later he came to him from his right side and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, which action is best?’ He said, ‘Good character.’ Then later he came to him from his left side and asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, which action is best?’ He said, ‘Good character.’ Then later he came to him from after him, meaning from behind him and asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, which action is best?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ turned to him and said, ‘What is

wrong with you that you do not understand? Good character, which is that you do not become angry if you are able."[7] This is a *mursal* hadith.

His words ﷺ to the one who sought advice from him, "Do not become angry," contain two matters:

First, that what he meant was to command the means which bring about good qualities of character such as nobility, liberal generosity, forbearance, modesty, humility, patient endurance, withholding harm [from others], turning away [from others' wrongs towards one], pardoning [others], swallowing one's rage, cheerfulness, joy, and so on of the beautiful qualities of character. When a person takes on these qualities of character and they become customary for him, it necessarily follows that it will repel anger when the things which cause it arise.

Second, that it means that you should not act in accordance with anger when it happens, but rather you should struggle with yourself to give up putting it into effect and acting by what it commands, because when anger takes control of the son of Ādam it is, as it were, a commander and a prohibitor. It is in this sense that Allah ﷻ says:

وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُّوسَى الْغَضَبُ

"When Musa's anger abated[8]."[9] When man does not put into effect what his anger commands him to do, and he struggles with himself over that, then the evil inherent in anger is repelled from him, and mostly his anger will still itself and quickly go, so that it is at that time as if he had not become angry. It is this sense which the Noble Qur'ān indicates in His words ﷻ [describing the people of *taqwā*]:

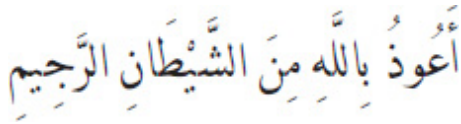
وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ

"And those who when they become angry they forgive."[10] And in His words ﷻ:

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"And those who swallow their rage and pardon people. Allah loves the doers of good."[11] The Prophet ﷺ used to order someone who became angry to practise the means which would drive away his anger and make it still. He praised whoever keeps control of himself when he is angry. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*

books from Sulaymān ibn Surad that he said, “Two men abused each other in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ while we were sitting with him. One of them would abuse the other [being] so enraged that his face had reddened. So the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘I know a phrase – if he said it – what he experiences [of anger] would leave him; if he were to say:



“I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed *shayṭān*.”’ They said to the man, ‘Do you not hear what the Prophet ﷺ says?’ He said, ‘I am not mad [or possessed by a jinn].’”[12]

Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that the Prophet ﷺ said in his *khuṭbah*, “Certainly anger is a burning coal in the son of Adam’s heart. Have you not seen the redness of his eyes and the swelling of his jugular veins? Whoever experiences anything of that, then let him cling to the earth.”[13]

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated in a hadith of Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If any of you become angry while standing then let him sit down.

Then if the anger leaves him..., but if not then let him lie down."[14]

Someone said that the meaning of this is that the one who is standing is fully prepared to retaliate, whereas the one sitting is less able to do that, and the one who is lying down is furthest away [from being able to retaliate]. He ordered that one should be as far away from retaliation as possible. Something that supports that is that it is narrated in the hadith of Sinān ibn Saʿd from Anas from the Prophet ﷺ and from a hadith of al-Ḥasan as a *mursal* hadith, from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "Anger is a live coal kindled in the son of Adam's heart. Do you not see the redness of his eyes and the swelling of his jugular veins? When any of you experience anything of that, let him sit down and let anger not pass beyond him,"[15] meaning that he should imprison it within himself and should not infect someone else with it by causing harm by [his] action. In this sense, the Prophet ﷺ said about trials [after him and before the end of time], "The one who is lying down during them is better than the one who is sitting. The one who is sitting is better than the one who is standing. The one who is standing is better than the one who is walking. The one who is walking

is better than the one who is running [or walking urgently]"[16] although this is by way of striking a simile for the speed with which people engage in dissension and civil disturbance (*fitan*), except that the meaning is that whoever is closer to hastening into it is worse than whoever is furthest away from it.

Imam Aḥmad narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When any of you become angry, let him say nothing," and he said it three times.[17]

This is also a great remedy for anger because words issue from the angry person in his state of anger which he will regret a great deal when he recovers his composure, such as curses, etc., and things which cause a great deal of harm. If he is silent and says nothing, all of this evil will pass him by. How excellent is that which Muwarriq al-ʿIjlī said رحمه الله "I have never filled up with rage, and I have never spoken in anger that which I would regret when I was in a state of contentment." One day ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz became angry and his son ʿAbd al-Malik said to him, may Allah show them both mercy, "You, Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Along with what Allah has given you and favoured you! do you become angry with such anger?"

He said to him, “Do you not become angry, ʿAbd al-Malik?” ʿAbd al-Malik answered, “Of what use is the capacity of my belly if I cannot send anger back within it so that it doesn’t appear.” These are people who mastered themselves when they became angry .

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of ʿUrwah ibn Muḥammad as-Saʿdī that a man spoke to him and made him angry, and he stood up and washed [as if preparing for prayer]. Then he said, “My father related to me from my grandfather ʿAṭiyyah that he said, ‘The Messenger of Allah said, “Anger is from *shayṭān*, and *shayṭān* is created from fire, and only water extinguishes fire. When any of you become angry then wash [as for prayer].”’”[18]

Abū Nuʿaym narrated with his chain of transmission from Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī that he spoke to Muʿāwiyah about something while he was on the mimbar and that he became angry, descended and washed [i.e. bathed]. Then he returned to the mimbar and said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah saying, ‘Anger is from *shayṭān*, and *shayṭān* is from fire, and water extinguishes fire. Whenever any of you become angry then wash.’”[19]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The strong man is not the one who throws others down on the ground. Rather, the strong man is he who masters himself when he is angry.”[20]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whom do you reckon as the overpowering wrestler among you?” We said, “The one whom [other] men do not wrestle to the ground.” He said, “He is not that, but it is the one who masters himself when he is angry.”[21]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Muʿādh ibn Anas al-Juhanī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Someone who swallows his rage while he is able to carry it into effect, then Allah will call him on the Day of Rising over the heads of the people to give him the choice of any of the Houris he wishes.”[22]

Imam Aḥmad narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “A slave has not swallowed anything that is better with Allah than swallowing rage that he suppresses seeking the face of Allah, exalted is He.”[23] In a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There is no act of swallowing

more beloved to Allah than swallowing the rage that a slave suppresses. A slave does not suppress [rage] for the sake of Allah but that Allah fills his heart with *īmān*."[24] Abū Dāwūd narrated the same sense from one of the Companions that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah fills him with [the feeling of] security and *īmān*."[25]

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, "A man came to Salmān and said, 'Abū ʿAbdullāh counsel me!' He said, 'Do not become angry.' He said, 'You have told me not to become angry, but it overwhelms me so much that I cannot master it.' He said, 'If you do become angry, then control your tongue and your hand.'" Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it. Control of the hand and tongue is the very thing which the Prophet ﷺ indicated with his command to the one who becomes angry to sit down and lie down, and with his command to him to remain silent.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, "Whoever is protected from desire, anger and covetousness is successful."

Al-Ḥasan said, "There are four things which if they are within anyone, then Allah will protect him from *shayṭān*, and forbid him [from entering] the Fire: whoever controls himself in desire, fear, appetite and

anger." These four which al-Ḥasan mentioned are the origins of all evil.

Desire (*raghbah*) for a thing is the inclination of the person towards it because of the belief that it has some benefit. Whoever desires something, then that desire will lead him to seek that thing in every way which he thinks will obtain it for him, and many of those ways may be forbidden, and that desired thing may itself be forbidden.

Rahbah is fear of something, and when someone fears something it becomes a cause of his trying to repel it from him by every means that he thinks will protect him, many of which may be forbidden.

Appetite (*shahwah*) is the inclination a person has towards something which suits him and in which he takes pleasure. Very often people incline to that which is forbidden such as adultery, theft, drinking, even *kufr*, witchcraft, hypocrisy and innovations.

Anger is the ferment of the heart's blood while seeking to repel someone who causes harm from fear of that happening, or seeking revenge on someone who has caused one harm after he has done that. Many forbidden acts originate from that such as homicide, violence, various types of tyrannical

wrongdoing and aggression, and many types of speech which are forbidden such as slander, cursing, obscenity, and it is possible that it will lead to the degree of *kufr*, as happened to Jabalah ibn al-Ayham.[26] It may also lead to oaths that it is impermissible in the *Sharīʿah* to take on oneself, and to divorce of a wife followed by deep regret.

It is obligatory for a *mu'min* to confine his appetite to seeking that which Allah permits, and often he obtains it with a right intention so he may be rewarded for it, and that anger should be for the purpose of repelling something harming one in one's *dīn* or somebody else in their *dīn*, or as retaliation upon someone who disobeys Allah and His Messenger, as He says, exalted is He:

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ

"Fight them! Allah will punish them at your hands, and disgrace them and help you against them, and heal the breasts of a people who believe. He will remove the rage from their hearts."[27]

This was the state of the Prophet ﷺ because he would not take revenge for his own sake. However, if the sacred things of Allah were violated, nothing could stand up to his anger. He never struck a servant or a woman with his hand, unless fighting in the way of Allah.[28] Anas served him for ten years and he ﷺ never said, "*Uff!*"[29] to him, nor did he say to him about anything he had done, "Why did you do that?" nor about something he had not done, "Did you not do it like that?"[30] There is a narration in which there is that when some of his family blamed him [Anas], he said ﷺ, "Leave him alone. If something is decreed it happens." In a version of aṭ-Ṭabarānī there is that Anas said, "I served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years and I never knew anything which suited him nor anything which he opposed. He was pleased with Allah for whatever existed."[31]

ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and she said, "His character was the Qur'ān,"[32] meaning that he took on the courtesies of the Qur'ān and the qualities of character of the Qur'ān. He was contented with whatever the Qur'ān praised, and displeased with whatever the Qur'ān blamed. There is another version from her that she

said, “His character was the Qur’ān. He would be pleased with that with which it was pleased, and displeased with that with which it was displeased.”

Because of the strength of his modesty he would not confront anyone with something they disliked, but rather his dislike would be recognised in his face, as is in the *ṣaḥīḥ* from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, who said, “The Prophet ﷺ was more stronglymodestthan the virginin herprivate chamber. Wheneverhesawsomething he disapproved of we would recognise it in his face.”[33] When Ibn Masʿūd conveyed the words of the person who said, “This is a division [of the spoils] by which the face of Allah is not intended,”[34] [he added] this was very hard for him ﷺ and his face changed and he became angry, but he did nothing more than say, “Mūsā was caused more trouble than this and he was patient.”[35]

When he ﷺ saw or heard something of which Allah disapproves he became angry at that and would speak about it and not be silent. He entered ʿĀ’ishah’s house رضي الله عنها and saw a curtain on which were figures. His face coloured and he tore it saying, “Among the people who will have the most severe torment on the Day of Rising will be the ones who fashion these images.”[36]

When someone complained to him about the imam who lengthened his prayer for people so much that some of them wanted to hold back from prayer with him, he became extremely angry, and he admonished people and told them to lighten [the prayer].[37]

When he saw phlegm in the *qiblah* of the mosque, he became furious and scraped it off. Then he said, "When any of you are in prayer then Allah is in front of his face, so let him not spit out phlegm in front of his face during the prayer."[38] One of his supplications was, "I ask You for the true word in anger and in contentment."[39] This is a mighty and precious thing. It is that a man should only say the truth whether he is angry or contented, because when most people are angry they do not consider what they say.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas, "Three things are of the character of *īmān*: he who when angry, his anger does make him enter into falsehood, and he who when pleased his contentment does not take him away from the truth, and he who when able, does not receive what is not his."[40]

It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that, "He told the story of two men of those who had been before us. One of them had been a worshipper and the

other had transgressed against himself [by committing many wrong actions] and the worshipper used to warn him and tell him off but he would not stop. One day he saw him doing a wrong action which he thought was tremendously serious and he said, 'By Allah! Allah will not forgive you!' And Allah forgave the wrongdoer and rendered the work of the worshipper void." Abū Hurayrah said, "He said a word which ruined his worldly life and his next life." Abū Hurayrah used to warn people strenuously against saying such a thing in anger. Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[41] This man became angry for the sake of Allah, but then in his anger for the sake of Allah said that which is not permissible and he made an absolute declaration about Allah of which he did not have knowledge and so Allah rendered his actions void. So how is it with someone who says that which is not permissible – during his anger on his own behalf and while he is following his own desire?

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿImrān ibn Husayn, "That they were with the Prophet ﷺ on one of his journeys with an Anṣārī woman on her she-camel, and it cried and grumbled a lot, so she cursed it. The

Prophet ﷺ heard her and said, ‘Take her goods and leave her.’”[42]

There is also in it from Jābir that he said, “We travelled with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on a military expedition. An Anṣārī man was on his water-carrying camel and it became slightly directionless and so he said to it, ‘Move! May Allah curse you!’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Get down off it, and do not accompany us upon something which has been cursed. Do not supplicate against yourselves, do not supplicate against your children, do not supplicate against your own property [so that you] do not come into accord with a moment in which Allah is asked for something and He responds.’”[43] All of this shows that the supplication of the angry person may be answered if it coincides with the moment of response [to supplications], and that it is forbidden to supplicate against oneself, one’s family and property while angered.

As for what Mujāhid said about His words, exalted is He:

وَلَوْ يُعَجِّلُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ الشَّرَّ اسْتِعْجَالَهُم بِالْخَيْرِ لَقُضِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَجَلُهُمْ

”If Allah were to hasten evil for people the way they try to hasten good, their term would already be completed for them,”[44] he said, “It is [the supplication] which reaches the family, children and one’s own property when one is angry about it, so that one says, ‘O Allah do not bless him! O Allah curse him!’” He said, “If He were to hasten that for him [according to his request], whoever he prayed against would perish and he would have killed him.” This shows that not everything for which the angry person supplicates against himself, his family and his property is granted while the hadith shows that he may be answered if his supplication coincides with the moment when supplications are answered.

As for that which is narrated from Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ that he said, “There are three who are not blamed for their anger: the fasting person, the sick person and the traveller,” and from al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays that he said, “Allah reveals to the two guardian [recording angels] who accompany the son of Ādam, ‘Do not record anything about My slave in his exasperation,’” and of Abū ʿImrān al-Jawnī that he said, “When the sick person becomes anxious and so does a wrong action, the angel on the right says to the angel on the left, ‘Do

not record it.'" Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it, but none of these have any recognised source in the *Sharīʿah* which would show [that they are true], and the hadith which we have mentioned before show that the opposite is true.

The saying of the Prophet ﷺ "When you become angry then be silent," shows that the angry person is charged with responsibility, when he is angry, for remaining silent and not speaking, for in that state he would be taken to task for his speech. It is authentically narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he told whoever becomes angry to remedy his anger with those words and deeds which will still it. This is identical to being charged with responsibility for cutting short his anger, so how can anyone say that one is not held responsible for what issues from one in the state of anger?

ʿAṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ said, "Nothing makes people of knowledge weep at the end of their lives more than a fit of anger which takes one of them and ruins the work of fifty, sixty or seventy years, and how often a fit of anger makes a person enter without consideration into that which he would wish to retract." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it.

Moreover, what those of the right-acting first generations meant who said that if the cause of the anger is something permissible such as illness, travel or an act of obedience such as the fast, then he is not blamed for it, is that there is no wrong held against him if what issued from him in his state of anger was most often speech which necessarily requires as a consequence vexation, curses and the like, just as he said ﷺ "I am only a human being: I become pleased as human beings become pleased and I become angry as human beings become angry. So whichever Muslim I curse or have flogged, then You make it an expiation for him [for his wrong deeds]."[45]

As for what is *kufr*, apostasy, homicide, expropriating property without right, and the likes, then a Muslim has no doubt that they did not intend the angry person not to be taken to account for these acts. Similarly, whatever issues from the angry person such as declarations of divorce, freeing of slaves and oaths, then he is held accountable for all of that, and there is no disagreement about that.

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is that Khawlah bint Thaʿlabah, the wife of Aws ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, argued with her husband and answered him back and

so he became angry and declared that she was like his mother's back [so that he would not touch her as his wife but would not set her free by divorce]. He was an old man and his character had worsened and he had become vexed. She went to the Prophet ﷺ and began to complain to him of what bad treatment she received from his bad tempered character, and then Allah revealed the *āyah* concerning *ẓihār*[46]. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told him to expiate the *ẓihār* [which is recounted] in a long story.[47]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated it in another way from Abū'l-ʿĀliyah that, "Khawlah angered her husband and so he declared *ẓihār* from her. She came to the Prophet ﷺ told him about that and said, 'He did not mean divorce.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'I think that you are indeed forbidden him.'" Then he mentioned the story at length. At the end of it there is that he said, "So Allah transformed the divorce and made it into a *ẓihār*."[48]

This man declared *ẓihār* in a state of anger, and the Prophet ﷺ used to think at that time that *ẓihār* was divorce, and so he said that she was forbidden him because of that, meaning that he was obliged by the divorce. When Allah made it an act of *ẓihār* that can

be expiated, he made its expiation obligatory [if the couple wished to resume marital relations] and he did not annul it [so outbursts in anger do have consequences].

Mujāhid narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās that a man said to him, “I have divorced my wife three times in a fit of anger,” so he said, “Ibn ʿAbbās cannot make permissible for you what Allah has forbidden you. You disobeyed your Lord and your wife is forbidden you.” Al-Jawzajānī and ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it with a chain of transmission which is according to the pre-conditions of Muslim [only using transmitters whom Muslim acknowledged to be trustworthy].

Qāḍī Ismāʿīl ibn Isḥāq narrated in the book *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* – Judgements of the Qur’ān – with a sound chain of transmission from ʿĀ’ishah ﵂ that she said, “Inadvertent statements in oaths occur in ostentation, jests and joking”[49]. And it is in discourse which the heart has not intended. The oaths for which expiation must be made include every oath which you swore in earnest, whether or not in anger, that you would definitely do such and such or give it up, and that is the obligatory oath for which there must be an expiation [if it is not fulfilled]. It has been related like

that from Ibn Wahb from Yūnus from az-Zuhrī from ʿUrwah from ʿĀ'ishah, one of the most authentic and soundest chains of transmission. This shows that the hadith which is narrated from her as a *marfūʿ* hadith, that, "There is no divorce nor freeing of slaves in constraint,"[50] is either not sound or that the explanation of it as referring to anger is not sound.[51] It has been authentically narrated of more than one of the Companions that they gave the judgement that the oath sworn by an angry person is binding and that there must be expiation for it [if it is not carried out]. That which is narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās which contradicts this has no sound chain of transmission. Al-Ḥasan said, "The correct form of divorce according to the Sunnah is that he should divorce her one time when she is in a state of purity in which they have not had intercourse, and that then he has the right to choose, between then and her entering on her third menstrual period. If it appears to him that he ought to take her back then he has more right to do that. If he was angry [when he pronounced the divorce] then in the time it takes for three menstrual periods or in three months if she does not have menstrual periods there is enough time for his anger to depart." Al-Ḥasan

said, “Allah made it very clear so that no one need regret a divorce [if it was done] as Allah commanded.” The Qāḍī Ismāʿīl narrated it.

Many people of knowledge regard allusions [to divorce] along with anger just like a clear declaration, in that by it divorce is carried out manifestly, and that it is not acceptable to interpret them along with the presence of anger as referring to something other than divorce. Some of them regard anger with allusions as an intention so that divorce is also effected by that inwardly, so how could it be that anger would be the very thing that would prevent divorce taking place?

1 At-Tirmidhī (2020)

2 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and *al-Awsaṭ*. This is what al-Haythamī says in *al-Majmaʿ* (8:70)

3 Aḥmad (3:484)

4 Aḥmad (2:175)

5 *Muwaṭṭa’* (2658)

6 Aḥmad (2:175)

7 *Kitāb aṣ-ṣalāh* (878)

8 Literally “became silent”. In the *āyah*, Allah uses the word *sakata* which means “became silent” as if to say the commanding

and prohibiting “voice” of anger became silent. This is what the author means to point out by quoting the *āyah*. Ed.

9 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 154

10 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 37

11 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 134

12 Al-Bukhārī (3282), Muslim (2610)

13 Aḥmad (3:19), at-Tirmidhī (2191)

14 Aḥmad (5:152), Abū Dāwūd (4782)

15 Al-Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-īmān* (6:310)

16 Muslim (2887)

17 Aḥmad (1:239)

18 Aḥmad (4:226), Abū Dāwūd (4784)

19 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:130)

20 Al-Bukhārī (6114), Muslim (2609)

21 Muslim (2608)

22 Aḥmad (3:440), at-Tirmidhī (2021), Abū Dāwūd (4777) and Ibn Mājah (4186)

23 Aḥmad (2:128) and Ibn Mājah (4189)

24 Aḥmad (1:327)

25 Abū Dāwūd (4778)

26 Jabalah ibn al-Ayham was a king who had become a Muslim at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. Then during the Caliphate of ʿUmar رضي الله عنه a man stepped on his robe during *ṭawāf* and Jabalah slapped him. ʿUmar gave the man the option of letting the matter rest or of taking retaliation by slapping him back. The man chose to slap him back. When Jabalah protested that he was a king,

ʿUmar said, “You are both the same in Islam.” Jabalah became so enraged by this that he left Islam and became a Christian. Ed.

27 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 14-15

28 Muslim (2328)

29 *Uff:* an expression of disparagement and disapproval. Trans.

30 Al-Bukhārī (6038) and Muslim (2309)

31 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam aṣ-ṣaghīr* (1100)

32 Muslim (746)

33 Al-Bukhārī (6102) and Muslim (2320)

34 This refers to an incident after the battle of Ḥunayn when the Prophet ﷺ divided the spoils by giving some of the Muhājirūn [emigrant companions from Makkah] more than the Anṣār [helpers, Companions of Madīnah]. He did this because the Emigrants had left everything behind and were not yet firmly established in Islam, so the extra spoils were a form of kindness to win their hearts. This resulted in one of the Anṣār complaining with these words. Ed.

35 Al-Bukhārī (3150) and Muslim (1062)

36 Al-Bukhārī (5954) and Muslim (2107)

37 Muslim (466)

38 Al-Bukhārī (406) and Muslim (547). Also narrated by Mālik, Abū Dāwūd and anNasā’ī.

39 Part of a hadith narrated by an-Nasā’ī (3:54)

40 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (164)

41 Aḥmad (2:323) and Abū Dāwūd (4901)

42 Muslim (2595)

43 Muslim (3009)

44 Sūrah Yūnus: 11

45 Al-Bukhārī (6361), and Muslim (2601)

46 *Ẓihār*: the pronouncement that the wife is like one's mother's back. Trans.

47 Aḥmad (6:410)

48 Aḥmad (2:410-1)

49 Referring to the *āyah* of Qur'ān: لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ "Allah will not take you to task for inadvertent statements in your oaths, but He will take you to task for the intention your hearts have made." Sūrat al-Baqarah:223. Trans.

50 Aḥmad (6:276)

51 The hadith is usually interpreted as referring to compulsion, i.e. that a divorce pronounced under compulsion is not binding, nor the freeing of a slave. Trans.

الحديث السابع عشر

عَنْ أَبِي يَعْلَى شَدَّادِ بْنِ أَوْسٍ ﷺ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿إِنَّ اللهَ كَتَبَ الإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، فَإِذَا قَتَلْتُمْ؛ فَأَحْسِنُوا الْقِتْلَةَ، وَإِذَا ذَبَحْتُمْ؛ فَأَحْسِنُوا الذِّبْحَ، وَلْيُحِدَّ أَحَدُكُمْ شَفْرَتَهُ، وَلْيُرِحْ ذَبِيحَتَهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Excellence (*Iḥsān*)

Abū Yaʿlā Shaddād ibn Aws ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah has made excellence (*iḥsān*)[1] obligatory for everything, so when you kill, then do the killing excellently, and when you slaughter [an animal] then perform the slaughter excellently, and let any of you sharpen his knife and let him put the animal at ease.” Muslim narrated it (1955).

Muslim narrated this hadith, but not al-Bukhārī, from a narration of Abū Qilābah from Abū’l-Ashʿath aṣ-Ṣanʿānī from Shaddād ibn Aws. Al-Bukhārī left it out because he didn’t narrate anything from Abū’l-Ashʿath in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, but he was a trustworthy Syrian. The like of it has been narrated from a hadith of

Samurah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ is One who does things excellently so do things excellently. If any of you kill, let him show honour and generosity to the one he kills, and if any of you slaughters, let him sharpen his knife and put his animal at rest.” Ibn ʿAdī narrated it.[2]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of Anas from the Prophet ﷺ in which he said, “If you pass judgement, be just, and if you kill, do it excellently, because Allah is One Who does things excellently and He loves those who do things excellently.”[3]

His words ﷺ, “Allah has made excellence (*iḥsān*) obligatory for everything,” and in a narration of Abū Isḥāq al-Fazārī in the book *as-Siyar* from Khālid from Abū Qilābah from the Prophet ﷺ, “Allah has made excellence (*iḥsān*) obligatory for everything,” or he said, “or on every creature.” Like this he narrated it as a *mursal* hadith, but with some doubt as to whether it was “for everything” or “on every creature”. The apparent outward meaning requires that He made excellence obligatory for every created being, so that every thing or every created being is that upon whom obligation has been placed, and that what is obligatory is excellence.

Some say that the meaning is that Allah has made excellence obligatory towards every thing or in respect to every thing or He made excellence obligatory in the management of every thing, and then the one on whom He has made it obligatory is not mentioned, and only the one to be shown excellence is mentioned.

The word "*kitābah*[4]" requires the meaning of obligation according to most of the people of *fiqh* and those who study *uṣūl* (source matters), contrary to the opinion of some of them. The word *kitābah* is only used in the Qur'ān for something that is an established obligation, either in *Sharīʿah* such as in His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّ الصَّلاَةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَاباً مَّوْقُوتاً

"The prayer is prescribed (*kitāb*) for the *mu'minūn* at set times,"[5] and His words:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ

"Fasting is prescribed (*kutiba*) for you," (Sūrat al-Baqarah:[182]) and His words:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ

“Fighting is prescribed (*kutiba*) for you,” (Sūrat al-Baqarah: 216), or for that which will come about through an unavoidable pre-ordained decree such as in His words:

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي

“Allah has decreed (*kataba*), ‘I will be victorious, I and My Messengers,’” (Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 21) and His words:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِن بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

“We decreed (*katabnā*) in the Zabūr, after the Reminder came: ‘It is My right-acting slaves who will inherit the earth,’” (Sūrat al-Anbiyā’: 105) and His words:

أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ

“He has decreed (*kataba*) *īmān* inside such people’s hearts.”[6]

The Prophet ﷺ said, concerning standing in prayer during the fast of Ramaḍān, “I was afraid that it would be made obligatory (*yuktabu*) upon you,”[7] and he said, “I was commanded the use of the *miswāk* (toothstick) so much so that I became afraid that it would be made obligatory (*yuktabu*) on me,”[8] and he said, “There has been decreed (*kutiba*) for the son of Ādam his share of adultery and he will unavoidably acquire that.”[9]

Thus this hadith is a textual statement on the obligatory nature of *iḥsān* – excellence. Allah, exalted is He, commands it, for He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ

“Allah commands justice and doing good (*iḥsān*),” (Sūrat an-Naḥl: 90) and He says:

وَأَحْسِنُوٓاْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

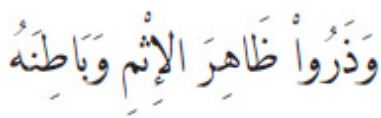
“And do good (*iḥsān*): Allah loves good-doers (*muḥsinūn*).”[10]

This command to excellence is sometimes in the sense of obligation, such as in good treatment of parents and relatives according to the measure by

which filial piety and joining ties of kinship is obtained, and good treatment of guests according to the measure by which his entertainment is obtained as we have mentioned previously, and sometimes it occurs in the sense of recommendation such as optional acts of *ṣadaqah* and the like.

This hadith shows that it is obligatory to have excellence and good treatment in every action, but that the excellence or good treatment in each thing is according to its measure. So for example, the excellence demanded in the discharge of inward and outward duties and obligations, if we consider their discharge in the sense of the completeness of their obligatory parts then this measure of excellence is obligatory, but as for the excellence required in completing and perfecting their optional extra aspects, that is not obligatory.

As for excellence in abandoning things which are prohibited, it is giving them up, and abandoning their outward and inward aspects as He, exalted is He, says:



"Abandon wrong action, outward and inward,"[11] this measure of excellence within it is obligatory.

As for excellence in being streadfast under things which are decreed, it is that one is steadfast under them without showing displeasure and impatience.

As for that excellence required in transacting and consorting with people, it is to undertake that which Allah has made obligatory of all of those rights [of the people]. The obligatory excellence that is required in governance and leadership of people is to undertake all of the obligations of governance, and whatever is over and above what is obligatory then the excellence in it is not obligatory.

As for excellence in the act of killing those humans[12] and animals whom it is permissible to kill, then it is that one releases the soul in the fastest, easiest and shortest possible manner without any increase to the torment, because that is to cause extra pain for which there is no need. This type is that which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in this hadith, and very probably it is mentioned by way of an example, or because of the need he had to explain it at that time, for he said, "So when you kill, then do the killing excellently, and when you slaughter [an animal] then

perform the slaughter excellently," and "*qitlah* – killing" and "*dhibḥah* – slaughter" both with *kasrah* mean the "form", meaning make the form of the slaughter and the form of the killing excellent. This shows that it is obligatory to be quick in releasing those souls which it is permissible to kill in the easiest manner. Ibn Ḥazm narrated that there is unanimous agreement that one has to slaughter animals well. The easiest way to kill a person is to strike him with a sword on the neck. Allah, exalted is He, said with respect to the *kuffār*:

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ

"Therefore when you meet those who are *kāfir* strike their necks."[13] He said, exalted is He:

سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ

"I will cast terror into the hearts of those who are *kāfir*, so strike their necks!"[14] Someone said that He specified the location in which the blow would be easiest for the one to be killed which is that place above the bones but below the brain. Durayd ibn aṣ-

Ṣummah advised the man who was to kill him to do it like that.

When the Prophet ﷺ sent a raiding party on a military expedition in the way of Allah, he used to say to them, “Do not mutilate and do not kill children.”[15] Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The most abstinent people in their killing are the people of *īmān*.”[16] Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn and Samurah ibn Jundub that, “The Prophet ﷺ used to prohibit mutilation.”[17] Al-Bukhārī narrated a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Yazīd from the Prophet ﷺ that he prohibited mutilation.[18] Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Yaʿlā ibn Murrah from the Prophet ﷺ that Allah, exalted is He, says, “Do not mutilate My slaves.”[19] He also narrated from a man among the Companions that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever mutilates any being with a *rūḥ* and then does not repent, Allah will mutilate him on the Day of Rising.”[20]

Know that permissible killing divides into two categories: first retaliation, and it is not permitted to mutilate someone whom one is killing in retaliation, but rather he should be killed in the [same] manner in

which he killed. On the question as to whether, if the original murderer mutilated his victim should he himself be mutilated just as he has done or should he just be killed with the sword, then there are two well-known positions of the people of knowledge:

The first position is that he should be treated in the same manner as he treated [his victim]. That is the position of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad in the more well-known position that he took. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that he said, "A servant girl in Madīnah went out wearing some silver jewellery and a Jew threw a stone at her. She was brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when she was at her last breath. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to her, 'So-and-so has killed you?' and she raised her head. The third time he said to her, 'So-and-so has killed you?' she lowered her head. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called for him and had his head crushed between two stones." In a narration from both of them there is that, "He was taken and he confessed." In a version from Muslim there is that, "A man of the Jews killed a servant girl of the Anṣār for some jewellery she was wearing, and then he cast her down an old disused well, and crushed her head with a stone. He was taken and

brought to the Prophet ﷺ and he ordered that he should be stoned until he was dead, and he was stoned until he was dead."

The second position is that there is to be no killing in retaliation except by means of the sword, and this is the position of ath-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, and also of Aḥmad in one narration from him.

There is a third statement narrated from Aḥmad that, "Whatever he did [to his victim] should be done to him, except for in the case where he burnt him with fire or where he mutilated [the victim] for then he must be killed with the sword because of the prohibition of mutilation and of burning [people alive] with fire." Al-Athram narrated it from him. It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There must be no killing in retaliation except with the sword." Ibn Mājah narrated it with a weak chain of transmission. Aḥmad said, "It is narrated, 'There must be no killing in retaliation except with the sword,' but not with a very good chain of transmission, and the hadith of Anas, meaning about the killing of the Jew with the stone, has a better chain of transmission and is generally better."

If [a murderer] mutilated [his victim] and then killed him, for example if he cut off his limbs and then killed him, is it sufficient to kill him or should he be dealt with as he dealt [with his victim] so that his limbs should be cut off and then he should be killed? There are two positions: first, that he should be dealt with in the same way as he treated [his victim], and this is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad in one of two narrations from him, Isḥāq and others. The second is that it is sufficient to kill him, and that is the position of ath-Thawrī, Aḥmad in a narration from him, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad. Mālik said, "If he did that [to his victim] as mutilation and torture, then he should be dealt with in the same manner. But if he did not do it in that way, then it is sufficient to kill him."

The second category [of permissible killing] is that the killing is [as a punishment] for *kufr*, either for the original condition of *kufr* or for reneging on Islam. Most of the people of knowledge also disapprove of mutilation in this case, and believe that the person must be killed with the sword. It has been narrated from a party of the right-acting first generations that it is permissible to mutilate in this case by burning the

person alive and so on, as Khālid ibn al-Walīd and others did. It is narrated of Abū Bakr that he burned Fajā'ah alive.[21]

It has been narrated that Umm Qirfah al-Fazāriyyah became a renegade during the time of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, and that he gave the command for her plaited locks of hair to be tied to the tails of two young she-camels or two horses, then they shouted at them and she was torn to pieces. The chains of transmission of this story are all broken and incomplete. Ibn Saʿd mentioned in his *Ṭabaqāt* without a chain of transmission that Zayd ibn Ḥārithah killed her in this manner at the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and told the Prophet ﷺ about it.

It is authentically narrated that ʿAlī burned renegades alive, and that Ibn ʿAbbās disowned that act of his. It has also been said that he did not burn them alive but that he smoked them out so much that they died. Someone else said that he killed them and then burnt them, but that is not a sound narration. It is narrated that a renegade was brought to him and he gave the command that he be trampled to death.

Ibn ʿAqīl, among our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs], chose [the position] that it is permissible to kill by

mutilation for *kufr*, particularly if it is gross or extreme, and he interpreted the prohibition of mutilation as referring to retaliation. Those who permit that seek to prove it by the hadith about the people from ʿUraynah, which the two of them narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in the hadith of Anas that, "Some people from ʿUraynah came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Madīnah and were adversely affected [by its climate]. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to them, 'If you want to go to the *zakāh* camels and drink their milk and urine,[22] then do so.' They did that and were restored to health. Then they rose up against the shepherds, killed them, reneged on their Islam and drove off several of the camels of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. That reached the Prophet ﷺ and he sent a party after them. They were brought back to him, and he had their hands and feet cut off, their eyes put out, and ordered that they be left on the stony tracts until they died." In another version there is that, "Then they were cast out in the sun until they died." In another version there is that, "Their eyes were put out and they were thrown out on the stony tract. They would ask for water but they were not given any."[23] In a version of at-Tirmidhī there is that, "He had alternate

hands and feet cut off."[24] In an-Nasā'ī's version there is that, "He had them crucified."[25]

The people of knowledge differ on the significance of their punishment. Some say that whoever does something similar to what they did, reneges, wages war, and takes property must be treated as they were treated. This is narrated of a group among whom were Abū Qilābah, and it is one narration from Aḥmad.

Some say that this shows the permissibility of mutilating anyone in general whose crimes are very gross, and that mutilation is only prohibited in retaliation. That is the position of Ibn ʿAqīl of our colleagues.

Some say that what was done to the people of ʿUraynah was abrogated by the prohibition of mutilation.

Some say that this happened before the revelation of the *ḥadd* punishments and the *āyah* about those who wage war [on Allah and His Messenger of Allah ﷺ], and that it was abrogated by that. This is the statement of a whole group among whom were al-Awzāʿī and Abū ʿUbayd.

Some say that what the Prophet ﷺ did to them was only because of the *āyah* about those who wage war

and that it has not been abrogated at all. They say, “The Prophet ﷺ only killed them and cut off their hands because they stole property, and whoever takes property and murders, then necessarily [his limbs] are cut off, he is killed and crucified. So he is killed for his murder, alternate hands and feet are cut off because he took property, and he is crucified because he committed the two criminal acts, murder and robbery together.” This is the statement of al-Ḥasan and it is also one narration from Aḥmad.

Their eyes were only put out because they themselves put out the eyes of the shepherds, which is what Muslim narrated in the hadith of Anas. Ibn Shihāb mentioned that they murdered the shepherd and mutilated him. Ibn Saʿd mentioned that they cut off his hand and his foot, and embedded thorns in his tongue and in his eyes until he died. In this case then, the amputation [of their limbs] and the putting out of their eyes, and their being left thirsty were as acts of retaliation. This is according to the interpretation of those who say that if the one who wages war [on Allah and His Messenger of Allah ﷺ] commits a crime which necessitates retaliation, then that is taken in full from him before he is executed, and this is the position of

Aḥmad. As to whether it is taken from him because it is obligatory as is his execution [since the amir must execute a murderer] or in the manner of retaliation, so that it may be dropped if the guardian [of the murdered person] pardons them [even though the amir must execute him], then there are two statements from him on that. However, the narration of at-Tirmidhī that the amputation [of their limbs] was done alternately shows that this was done because of their waging war [since that is prescribed in the *āyah*] unless it was that they had cut off the shepherd's alternate hand and foot [i.e. right hand and left foot or vice versa and so their's were cut off in retaliation], and Allah knows best.

It is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he had given permission to burn with fire, and that later he prohibited that, as is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us out on a military expedition and he said, 'If you find so-and-so and so-and-so,' mentioning two men of Quraysh, 'then burn them in fire.' Then later the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, when we intended to depart, 'I had ordered you to burn soand-

so and so-and-so with fire. No one punishes with fire but Allah, so if you find them, kill them.'"[26]

There is also in it from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not punish with the punishment of Allah ﷻ."[27] Imam Aḥmad ﷺ, Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā'ī narrated the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that he said, "We were with the Prophet ﷺ and we passed by a colony of ants which had been burned, and the Prophet ﷺ became angry and said, 'It is not fitting for any man to punish with the punishment of Allah ﷻ.'"[28]

Khālid burned a party of renegades alive. It is narrated that a party of the Companions regarded it as correct to burn those who do the same deed (sodomy) as the people of Lūt. It is narrated from ʿAlī that he advised Abū Bakr to kill [a sodomite] and then burn him in fire. Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh regarded that as better so that it would not be punishment with fire.

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is that when Ibn Muljam struck ʿAlī, ʿAlī said, "Do with him as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to do with the man who wanted to kill him. He said, 'Kill him, then burn him.'"[29]

Most of the people of knowledge disapprove of burning even vermin with fire. Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī

said, “Burning a scorpion with fire is mutilation.” Umm ad-Dardā’ forbade burning gnats with fire. Aḥmad said, “Do not grill fish over a fire while they are still alive.” But he said, “The locust is less serious since it has no blood.”

It is firmly established that the Prophet ﷺ forbade the confining (*ṣabr*) of beasts, which is that a beast is captured and then shot with arrows and the like until it dies. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that, “The Prophet ﷺ forbade the confinement of beasts.”[30] There is also in both of them that Ibn ʿUmar, “Passed by some people who had set up a chicken and were shooting at it.” Ibn ʿUmar said, “Who did this? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed those who do this.”[31]

Muslim narrated the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ that, “He forbade taking anything with a *rūḥ* as a target.”[32] And a target (*gharaḍ*) is that which is used for shooting at with arrows. There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ forbade using creatures for target practice, i.e. that the creature is shot and then eaten. “But let it be slaughtered, then let them shoot if they wish.”[33] There are many hadith in the same sense. For this reason the Prophet ﷺ commanded excellence or good

treatment in the killing and slaughter [of animals], and he commanded that the blade should be sharpened, and that the animal which is to be slaughtered should be put at ease, which indicates that slaughtering with a sharp knife puts the slaughtered animal at rest with the speedy departure of its soul.

Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered that blades must be sharpened and concealed from beasts, and he said, ‘When any of you slaughters then let him despatch [the slaughtered animal],” meaning “let him be quick in slaughtering.”[34]

It has been transmitted that one is commanded to be gentle to the animal to be slaughtered at the time of slaughter. Ibn Mājahnarrated from a hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by a man while he was pulling a ewe by the ear, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Let go of its ear and take hold of its *sālifah*,’”[35] and the *sālifah* is the forepart of the neck.

Al-Khallāl and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of ʿIkrimah from Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by a man who had placed his foot on the side of a ewe while he was sharpening his knife

and it was looking at it with its eyes. He said, ‘Why not [sharpen] before this? Do you want to make it die many deaths?’”[36] It has been narrated from ʿIkrimah as a *mursal* hadith transmitted by ʿAbd ar-Razzāq and others in which are the extra words, “Could you not have sharpened your knife before you threw it down on its side?”[37]

Imam Aḥmad said, “It should be led to its slaughter gently, and the knife should be concealed from it, and the knife should not be revealed until the moment of slaughter. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered that the blade should be concealed.” He said, “Whatever beasts are confused about, they are not confused about knowing their Lord and knowing that they are to die.” He said, “It is narrated that Ibn Sābiṭ said, ‘Domestic animals are predisposed to every matter except in recognition of their Lord and fear of death.’”[38]

The order has been transmitted that the jugular veins must be severed when slaughering, as Abū Dāwūd narrated in the hadith of ʿIkrimah from Ibn ʿAbbās and Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ that, “He forbade the ‘slit animal of *shayṭān*’, which is the one that is slaughtered and the skin is cut but the jugular veins are not severed.”[39] Ibn Ḥibbān narrated

it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* and he has the words, "ʿIkrimah said, 'They used to cut some small part of it and then leave it to die and they would not sever the jugular veins, and that was then forbidden.'"[40]

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrated in his book from Muḥammad ibn Rāshid from al-Waḍīn ibn ʿAṭā' that he said, "A butcher opened a gate to slaughter a sheep and it slipped away from him and came to the Prophet ﷺ and so he followed it and caught it and was dragging it by its foot. So the Prophet ﷺ said to it, 'Be patient at the command of Allah. And you, butcher, drive it gently to its death.'"[41]

There is with his [ʿAbd ar-Razzāq's] chain of transmission from Ibn Sīrīn that ʿUmar saw a man dragging a sheep by its foot in order to slaughter it and he said to him, "Woe to you! Lead it to its death gracefully."[42]

Muḥammad ibn Ziyād narrated that Ibn ʿUmar saw a butcher dragging a sheep and he said, "Drive it to its death gracefully." The butcher took out his blade and said, "I won't drive it gracefully when I want to slaughter it right now!" And he said, "Drive it gracefully."

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Muʿāwiyah ibn Qurrah from his father that, “A man said to the Prophet ﷺ ‘Messenger of Allah, I slaughter the sheep and show mercy to it.’ So the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘If you are merciful to the sheep, Allah will be merciful to you.’”[43] Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh said, “Truly Allah will show mercy for mercy shown to a sparrow.” Nawf al-Bakālī said, “A man slaughtered a calf of his in front of its mother and lost his strength. Then while he was underneath a tree in which was a nest with a young bird, the young bird fell to the ground. He took pity on it and returned it to its place, and Allah returned his strength to him.” It is narrated by more than one path of transmission from the Prophet ﷺ that, “He forbade that a mother should be driven out of her wits [by being separated] from her child,” and this is general concerning the children of Ādam and others.

In the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd there is that, “The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the firstling of the camel and he said, ‘It is true [i.e. permissible to slaughter], and that you leave it until it becomes two or three years old and give it away to a widow, or carry on it in the Way of Allah is better than if you slaughter it so

that its meat is attached to its fur,[44] you turn your vessel upside down,[45] and drive your female camel to her wits' end.'"[46]

This means that when the young one of the she camel is slaughtered while he is young at his birth, there will be no benefit from his meat, and the owner will be caused trouble because the female camel ceases to give milk, and the turning upside down of the vessel refers to the milking vessel into which the female camel is milked, and the female camel is driven to her wits' end for her young one because of her loss of it.

1 *Iḥsān* connotes not only excellence, but all generous kind treatment. Trans.

2 Ibn ʿAdī (1955), Aḥmad (4:123) and also narrated by at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah and others.

3 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (5735)

4 Literally "writing". Trans.

5 Sūrat an-Nisā':103

6 Sūrat al-Mujādalah: 22

7 Al-Bukhārī (769)

8 Aḥmad (3:490)

9 Al-Bukhārī (6343), Muslim (2657)

10 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 195

11 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 120

12 Killing humans in retaliation for murder and *ḥadd* punishments. Trans.

13 Sūrah Muḥammad: 4

14 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 12

15 Part of a longer hadith narrated by Muslim (1731)

16 Abū Dāwūd (2666), Ibn Mājah (2681), Aḥmad (1:393)

17 Abū Dāwūd (2667), Aḥmad (4:439)

18 Al-Bukhārī (5197)

19 Aḥmad (4:173)

20 Aḥmad (2:92, 115)

21 Fajā'ah took weapons and permission from Abu Bakr to deal with renegades. Instead, he went and attacked Muslims. Eventually, he was captured and brought to Abu Bakr who ordered for him to be burnt alive. Ed.

22 This hadith has been used by some of the people of knowledge such as Mālik, Aḥmad and some Shāfiʿī scholars as proof that the urine of animals that are permissible to eat is pure (*ṭāhir*). Ash-Shāfiʿī and the majority of scholars argue, based on other proofs, that the urine of such animals is in fact impure (*nājis*) and that the incident mentioned in the hadith was exceptional to the rule. (Abridged from *Fatḥ al-bārī* on the commentary of this hadith). Ed.

23 Al-Bukhārī (6804-5), Muslim (1671)

24 At-Tirmidhī in *as-Sunan* (72)

25 An-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan* (7:95)

26 Al-Bukhārī (3016)

27 Al-Bukhārī (3017)

28 Abū Dāwūd (2675), Aḥmad (1:423)

29 Aḥmad (1:92-93)

30 Al-Bukhārī (5513), Muslim (1956)

31 Al-Bukhārī (5515), Muslim (1958)

32 Muslim (1957)

33 Aḥmad (2:402)

34 Aḥmad (2:108), Ibn Mājah (3172)

35 Ibn Mājah (3171)

36 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (3590), and in *al-Kabīr* (11:332-3)

37 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (8608)

38 i.e. they do not make conscious and intelligent distinctions but rather they go with inbuilt instincts. However, they consciously recognise Allah and fear death. Ed.

39 Abū Dāwūd (2826)

40 Ibn Ḥibbān (5888)

41 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (8609)

42 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (8605)

43 Aḥmad (3:436)

44 The meat would be attached to its fur because it is young and has no fat in its body. In other words slaughtering it at a young age is not worthwile because one would get less meat out of it. Ed.

45 This is refering to the vessel or bucket used for milking a cow; indicating to the fact that the mother of the calf would stop giving milk if the calf is slaughtered and thus the vessel would not be filled milk, instead it would be left empty and turned on

its side. This is what is explained by the author in the subsequent paragraph. Ed.

46 Abū Dāwūd (6842)

الحديث الثامن عشر

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ وَمُعاذٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿اتَّقِ اللهَ حَيْثُمَا كُنْتَ، وَأَتْبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ؛ تَمْحُهَا، وَخَالِقِ النَّاسَ بِخُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ﴾. رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَقَالَ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ. وفِي بعضِ النُّسَخِ: حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ.

Taqwā of Allah

Abū Dharr Jundub ibn Junādah and Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Muʿādh ibn Jabal ﷺ narratedthat theMessengerof Allah ﷺ said, “Have *taqwā* of Allah wherever you are and follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it, and treat people with good character.” At-Tirmidhī narrated it (1987), and said, “A good hadith,” and in some copies, “Good, *ṣaḥīḥ*.”

At-Tirmidhī narrated this hadith from the narration of Sufyān ath-Thawrī from Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit from Maymūn ibn Abī Shabīb from Abū Dharr. He also narrated it with this chain of transmission from Maymūn from Muʿādh. He mentioned that his shaykh, Mahmud ibn Ghaylan, said, “The hadith of Abū Dharr

is more sound." There are disagreements about this hadith's chain of transmission. Some say about it that it is from Ḥabīb from Maymūn that the Prophet ﷺ advised that, and that it is a *mursal* hadith. Ad-Dāraquṭnī gives more weight to this *mursal* hadith.

At-Tirmidhī regarded this hadith as *ḥasan* (good). That which is written in some of the copies of it that it is *ṣaḥīḥ* is very unlikely. However, al-Ḥākim narrated it and said that it is sound according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) but this is erroneous from two points of view: first, that al-Bukhārī did not narrate anything in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Maymūn ibn Abī Shabīb, sometimes called Ibn Shabīb, nor did Muslim, except in the introduction to his book in a single hadith from al-Mughīrah ibn Shuʿbah. Second, that it is not correct that Maymūn heard anything from any of the Companions. Al-Fallās said, "In none of his narrations from the Companions is there the phrase, 'I heard,' and I have never heard that anyone claimed that he heard [hadith] from the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ." Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said, "His narrations from Abū Dharr and ʿĀ'ishah are not connected [i.e. he did not hear from them directly]." Abū Dāwūd said, "He did not meet ʿĀ'ishah

and he did not see ʿAlī." So he most certainly did not meet Muʿādh[1].

Al-Bukhārī, his shaykh ʿAlī al-Madīnī, Abū Zurʿah, Abū Ḥātim and others all considered that a hadith is not connected unless by authentically established meetings [between the different members of the chain of transmission]. The words of Imam Aḥmad show that, and ash-Shāfiʿī expressed that in his *Risālah*. All of this is opposite to the view of Muslim[2] ﷺ.

It has been narrated in other ways from the Prophet ﷺ that he counselled Muʿādh and Abū Dharr with this piece of advice. Al-Bazzār narrated the hadith of Abū Lahīʿah from Abū'z-Zubayr from Abū'ṭ-Ṭufayl from Muʿādh that the Prophet ﷺ sent him to some people, "And he said, 'Messenger of Allah, advise me.' He said, 'Spread the [greeting of] peace, and be liberally generous with food and be modest before Allah with the modesty [you would show before] a man of some standing from your family. When you do wrong, then do good. Let your character be good as much as you are able."[3]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Ḥākim narrated the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, that "Muʿādh ibn Jabal wanted to travel and said, 'Messenger of Allah, counsel

me.' He said, 'Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him.' He said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me more.' He said, 'When you do wrong then do good.' He said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me more.' He said, 'Be upstanding, and let your character be good.'"[4]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Darrāj from Abū'l-Haytham from Abū Dharr that, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, 'I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah in the your secret matters and publicly, and when you do wrong, then do good. Do not ask anyone for anything even if your whip falls, do not receive a trust, and do not judge between two people.'"[5]

He also narrated in another way that Abū Dharr said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, teach me an action which will draw me closer to the Garden and make me more remote from the Fire.' He said, 'When you do a wrong action then do a good action, because it is [worth] ten the like of it.'" He said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, is one of the good deeds [to say] "There is no god but Allah"?' He said, 'It is the best of the good deeds.'"[6]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr narrated in *at-Tamhīd* with a chain of transmission on which there are some views that Anas said, "The Prophet ﷺ sent Muʿādh to the Yemen

and said, ‘Muʿādh, have *taqwā* of Allah and treat people with good character, and when you do a wrong, follow it up with a good action.’” So he said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, is [saying] “There is no god but Allah” one of the good actions?’ He said, ‘It is one of the greatest of the good actions.’”[7] The advice of the Prophet ﷺ to Muʿādh has been narrated in hadith of Ibn ʿUmar and others within the context of a lengthy [hadith] in different routes of transmission in which there are weaknesses.

Comprised under this same meaning is the hadith of Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ that, “He was asked, ‘What will cause people to enter the Garden the most?’ He said, ‘Fear of Allah and good nature.’” Imam Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and at-Tirmidhī related it, and Ibn Ḥibbān recorded it as sound in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.[8]

This counsel is a magnificent and comprehensive piece of advice concerning the rights and duties owing to Allah and the rights and duties owing to the slaves [of Allah], because the right of Allah on His slaves is that they should have *taqwā* of Him with the *taqwā* due to Him. *Taqwā* of Allah is Allah’s advice to the first and the latter peoples. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

"We have instructed those given the Book before you and you yourselves, to have *taqwā* of Allah."[9]

The [linguistic] origin of *taqwā* is that the slave should put a barrier (*wiqāyah*) between him and that which he fears and is wary of, which will protect (*taqī*) him from it. So the slave's *taqwā* towards his Lord is that he puts a barrier between him and that which he fears from his Lord of His anger, displeasure and His punishment, which will protect him from that. That barrier is to obey Him and to avoid disobeying Him.

Sometimes *taqwā* is linked to the name of Allah ﷻ as in His words, exalted is He:

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

"So have *taqwā* of Allah, Him to whom you will be gathered."[10] He says, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“You who have *īmān*! have *taqwā* of Allah and let each self look to what it has sent forward for Tomorrow. Have *taqwā* of Allah. Allah is aware of what you do.”[11] When *taqwā* is linked to Him ﷻ then the meaning is “have *taqwā* of His displeasure and His anger, which is the mightiest thing to have *taqwā* of, and from which arises His worldly and other-worldly punishment.” He says, exalted is He:

وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ

“Allah advises you to be afraid of Him.”[12] He says, exalted is He:

هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَى وَأَهْلُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ

“He is entitled to be feared and entitled to forgive.”[13] For He, glorious is He, is entitled to be feared and to be shown awe, to be exalted and magnified in His slaves’ hearts until they worship and serve Him and obey Him, because of the honour He is due and worthy of, and [His] attributes of greatness, vastness, the strength of [His] assault, and the severity of [His] punishment. There is in [*Jāmiʿ*] *at-Tirmidhī*

from Anas from the Prophet ﷺ concerning this *āyah*, "He is entitled to be feared and entitled to forgive," that he said, "Allah, exalted is He, says, 'I am entitled to be feared. Whoever fears Me and does not put another god with Me, then I am entitled to forgive him."[14]

Sometimes *taqwā* is linked to the punishment of Allah and its location which is the Fire, or to its time such as the Day of Rising, as He, exalted is He, says:

وَاتَّقُواْ النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

"Have fear of the Fire which has been prepared for the *kāfirūn*."[15] He says, exalted is He:

فَاتَّقُواْ النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

"then fear the Fire whose fuel is people and stones, made ready for the *kāfirūn*." (Sūrat al-Baqarah:[24]) He says, exalted is He:

وَاتَّقُواْ يَوْماً تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ

“Have fear of a Day when you will be returned to Allah.”[16] He says, exalted is He:

وَاتَّقُواْ يَوْماً لاَّ تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَن نَّفْسٍ شَيْئاً

“Have fear of a Day when no self will be able to compensate for another in any way.”[17]

Comprised under complete and perfect *taqwā* are the performance of the obligations, and the abandoning of prohibited matters and ambivalent matters. Probably comprised under it after that are the performance of recommended matters and the giving up of disapproved matters, which is the highest degree of *taqwā*. Allah says, exalted is He

الم ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلاَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

“Alif Lam Mim. That is the Book, without any doubt. It contains guidance for those who have *taqwā*: those who have *īmān* in the Unseen and establish *ṣalāh* and give of what We have provided for them; those who have *īmān* in what has been sent down to you and

what was sent down before you, and are certain about the *ākhirah*."[18] He says, exalted is He:

وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَالْمَلآئِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ
ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلاةَ وَآتَى
الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُواْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاء والضَّرَّاء وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

"Rather, those with true devoutness are those who have *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who have *taqwā*."[19]

Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, "The cry will be given on the Day of Rising, 'Where are the people of *taqwā*!' They will stand in proximity to the All-Merciful and He will not veil Himself or conceal Himself from them." They said to him, "Who are the people of *taqwā*?" He said, "People who protect themselves from

attributing partners to Allah and from worshipping idols, and they make their worship truly for the sake of Allah."

Ibn ʿAbbās said, "The people of *taqwā* are those who fear Allah's punishment for giving up what they know to be true of the guidance, and they hope for His mercy for their affirmation of what He brought."

Al-Ḥasan said, "The people of *taqwā* protect themselves against what Allah has forbidden them, and they discharge that which He has made obligatory on them."

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, "*Taqwā* of Allah is not fasting in the daytime nor is it standing in prayer at night and then creating confusion and disorder in between. But, *taqwā* of Allah is giving up what Allah has forbidden and performing that which He made obligatory. Whoever is provided with good beyond that, then it is good upon good."

Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb said, "*Taqwā* is that you act in obedience to Allah upon a light from Allah hoping for a reward from Allah, and that you give up disobedience to Allah upon a light from Allah fearing the punishment of Allah."

Abū'd-Dardā' said, "The completion of *taqwā* is that the slave should have so much *taqwā* of Allah that he has *taqwā* of Him with respect to [actions] which are the weight of the littlest ant, and so much that he gives up some of what he regards as *ḥalāl* out of fear that it might be forbidden so that it might be a barrier between him and that which is prohibited, because Allah has made clear to the slaves the state to which He will bring them when He says:

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْراً يَرَهُ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرّاً يَرَهُ

'Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. Whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.'[20] So do not belittle doing anything of good, nor protecting yourself from anything of evil."

Al-Ḥasan said, "*Taqwā* continues with the people of *taqwā* to the point where they give up much of that which is permitted for fear of that which is forbidden."

Ath-Thawrī said, "They were only called the people of *taqwā* because they protect themselves against that which is not [ordinarily] protected against."

Mūsā ibn Aʿyun said, "The people of *taqwā* purify themselves of some permitted things for fear that they

should fall into that which is not permitted, and so Allah names them the people of *taqwā*." We have previously seen the hadith, "The slave will not attain to be one of the people of *taqwā* until he gives up that in which there is no harm as a precaution against that in which there is harm," and the hadith, "Whoever guards himself against ambivalent matters has gone to the utmost limit in seeking to be clear in his *dīn* and his honour."

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, "The person of *taqwā* is more serious about taking himself to account than the greedy and avaricious partner is with his partner."

Ibn Masʿūd spoke about His words, exalted is He:

اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ

"Have *taqwā* of Allah with the *taqwā* due to Him".[21] He said, "It is that He should be obeyed and not disobeyed, that He should be remembered and not forgotten, and that He should be shown gratitude and not ingratitude (*kufr*)." Al-Ḥākim narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but it is more correct to say that it is a *mawqūf* statement. In gratitude to Him are included all acts of obedience. The meaning of "remembering Him

and not forgetting Him" is the slave's remembering in his heart the commands of Allah in his movements, stillnesses and in his words, and to obey them, and [to remember] His prohibitions in all of that and avoid them.

The usage of *taqwā* in the sense of avoiding the things which are forbidden is often the dominant one, as Abū Hurayrah said when he was asked about *taqwā*, and he said, "Have you ever taken a path covered in thorns?" He answered, "Yes." He asked, "How did you behave?" He replied, "If I saw a thorn I tried to avoid it, or I stepped over it, or I stopped short before it." He said, "That is *taqwā*." Ibn al-Muʿtazz used this meaning when he said:

> Leave wrong actions, the small and the great;
> that is *taqwā*.
> Be as if walking on top of thorny ground, taking
> precautions against what you see.
> Do not belittle something because it is small.
> Mountains are composed of pebbles.

The source of *taqwā* is that the slave knows what he must beware and then he avoids it. ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdullāh said, "The perfection of *taqwā* is that you

should seek earnestly the knowledge of that which is not known to that which is known of it."

Maʿrūf al-Karkhī mentioned that Bakr ibn Khunays asked, "How can anyone be a person of *taqwā* who does not know what he must beware of?" Then Maʿrūf al-Karkhī said, "If you do not make your *taqwā* good you will consume usury. If you do not make your *taqwā* good a woman will meet you and you will not lower your eyes. If you do not make your *taqwā* good you will place your sword on your shoulder [ready to fight in civil strife], whereas the Prophet ﷺ said to Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, 'When you see that my ummah has fallen into disagreement, then betake yourself to your sword and strike [Mount] Uḥud with it [and break it in pieces].'"[22] Then Maʿrūf said, "Perhaps we ought to have been wary of this assembly of ours." Then he said, "Your coming here with me from the mosque, perhaps we should have been wary of that. Has it not been narrated in the hadith that, 'The trial (*fitnah*) of the one followed is the humbling of the follower'?[23] meaning people's walking behind a man."

In general, *taqwā* is what Allah advises all of His creation [to have], and it is what the Messenger of

Allah ﷺ counsels his ummah. When he ﷺ used to appoint an amir over a military expedition he would advise him personally to have *taqwā* of Allah and to treat the Muslims with him well.[24]

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered the Farewell Address (*khuṭbah*) on the Day of Sacrifice,[25] he counselled people to have *taqwā* of Allah and to hear and obey their leaders.[26] When he exhorted people and they said to him, "It is as if it is an admonition of leave-taking, so advise us." He said, "I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah, and to hear and obey." In the lengthy hadith of Abū Dharr which Ibn Ḥibbān and others narrated, there is that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, counsel me.' He said, 'I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah because it is the main part of the entire matter.'"[27]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith that Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, counsel me.' He said, 'I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah, because it is the main part of everything. You must do *jihād* because it is the monasticism of Islam.'"[28] Others narrated it with the wording, "You must have *taqwā* of Allah, because it is that which gathers together every good thing."[29]

In at-Tirmidhī there is from Yazīd ibn Salamah that, “He asked the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘Messenger of Allah, I heard many different things from you and so I am afraid that the last of them will make me forget the first of them[30] so tell me something comprehensive.’ He said, ‘Have *taqwā* of Allah concerning that which you know.’”[31]

The first right-acting generations continually advised each other in this way. Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ used to say in his *khuṭbah*, “I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah and that you praise Him with that to which He is entitled, and that you mix longing and desire with fear, and that you unite being demanding with your asking [Allah], because Allah ﷻ praised Zakariyya and his family when He said:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

“They outdid each other in good actions, calling out to Us in yearning and in awe, and humbling themselves to Us.”[32]

When death came to him [Abū Bakr] and he appointed ʿUmar, he called him and gave him some advice. The first of that which he said to him was, “Have *taqwā* of Allah, ʿUmar!” ʿUmar wrote to his son

ʿAbdullāh, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ because whoever has *taqwā* of Him, He will preserve (*waqā*) him, and whoever advances a loan (*qarḍ*) to Him, He will repay, and whoever is grateful to Him, He will give him increase. Make *taqwā* the goal of your eyes and the illumination of your heart.”

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib appointed a man to lead a military expedition and he said to him, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ the One Whom you must meet, and the One Whom you have no other goal than Him, and He Who possesses the world and the hereafter.”

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz wrote to a man, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ for He does not accept anything else, and He only shows mercy to its people, and He only rewards for its sake. Those who will advise others to have it are many, but those who act by it are few. May Allah make us and you of the people of *taqwā*.”

When he was appointed *khalīfah*, he gave a *khuṭbah*, praised Allah and said, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ because *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ is a substitute for everything but there is no substitute for *taqwā* of Allah.”

A man said to Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd, “Advise me.” He said, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah and *iḥsān*, because Allah is with the ones who have *taqwā* and the ones who act with *iḥsān*.” A man who intended to go on Ḥajj said to him, “Advise me.” He said, “Have *taqwā* of Allah, for the one who has *taqwā* of Allah will never be lonely.”

Someone said to one of the men of the Followers at his death, “Advise me.” He said, “I advise you [to read] the conclusion of Sūrat an-Naḥl:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَواْ وَّالَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ

‘Allah is with those who have *taqwā* of Him and with those who are good-doers (*muḥsinūn*).’[33]”

One of the men of the right-acting first generations wrote to a brother of his, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah, because it is the noblest of things you will keep as a secret, and the most beautiful things you will make public, and the best thing you will store up as a treasure. May Allah help us and you with it, and make its reward obligatory for us and for you.”

One of their men wrote to abrother of his, “I advise you and ourselves to have have *taqwā*, because it is the

best provision for the next life and this life. Make it your way to every good thing, and your way of flight from every evil, because Allah ﷻ has undertaken to save its people from that which they are afraid of and He has undertaken to provide for them from whence they do not anticipate."

Shuʿbah said, "Whenever I wanted to go out, I used to say to al-Ḥakam, 'Is there anything you need?' He said, 'I advise you with that with which the Prophet ﷺ advised Muʿādh ibn Jabal, "Have *taqwā* of Allah wherever you are and follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it, and treat people with good character."'" It is firmly established that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتُّقَى وَالْعِفَّةَ وَالْغِنَى

"O Allah, I ask You for guidance, *taqwā*, abstinence and freedom from need."[34]

Abū Dharr said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited this *āyah*:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجاً

‘Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out,’[35] and then said, ‘Abū Dharr, even if everybody adopted it, it would be sufficient for them.”[36]

What he meant by his saying ﷺ “Have *taqwā* of Allah wherever you are,” was in secret and publicly, when people see you and when they don’t see you. We have mentioned from the hadith of Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said to him, “I counsel you to have *taqwā* of Allah in the secret of your affair and publicly,” and the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

أَسْأَلُكَ خَشْيَتَكَ فِي الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

“I ask You for fear of You while unwitnessed and when witnessed.”[37] Fear of Allah while being witnessed and while unwitnessed is one of the matters which cause salvation.

We have seen previously the hadith of Abū'ṭ-Ṭufayl from Muʿādh that the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Be modest before Allah with the modesty [you would show before] a man of some standing from your family." This is the necessary cause of secret fear of Allah, because whoever knows that Allah sees him wherever he is, and that He observes his inward and his outward, his secret and his public, and seeks to keep that in his consciousness during his moments of solitude, that will necessarily cause him to give up acts of disobedience done secretly. The Qur'ān indicates this sense in His words, exalted is He:

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءلُونَ بِهِ وَالأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيباً

"Have *taqwā* of Allah in whose name you make demands on one another and also in respect of your families. Allah watches over you continually."[38]

One of the right-acting first generations used to say to his companions, "May Allah make us and you do without that which is forbidden like someone who is able to do it while in solitude but who knows that Allah sees him and so gives it up from fear of Him," or as he said.

Ash-Shāfiʿī said, “The most important things are three [in number]: liberal generosity when one has little, scrupulousness in solitude, and the true word [spoken] with those from whom one hopes [for something] and whom one fears.”

Ibn as-Sammāk al-Wāʿiẓ[39] wrote to a brother of his, “I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah Who is your intimate confidant in your secret and Who watches over you in your public sphere. Put Allah in your consciousness in every state, night and day. Fear Allah according to the measure of His nearness to you and His power over you. Know that you are in His eye and that you never exit from beneath His authority to the authority of anyone else, nor from His kingdom to the kingdom of anyone else. Let your fearful caution of Him be very great, and let your shyness before Him increase. And peace.”[40]

Abū’l-Jald said, “Allah, exalted is He, revealed to one of the prophets, ‘Say to your people, “What is wrong with you that you conceal your wrong actions from people but show them to Me? If you think that I do not see you, then you have associated partners with Me? If you think that I see you, then why do you

regard Me as the most insignificant of those who look at you?""""

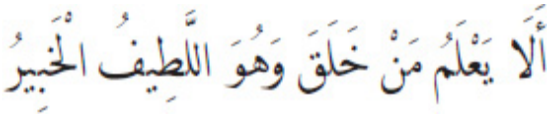
Wuhayb ibn al-Ward used to say, "Fear Allah to the measure of His power over you, and be modest before Him to the measure of His nearness to you." A man said to him, "Counsel me." He said to him, "Have *taqwā* of Allah lest He become the most insignificant of those who look upon you."

One of the right-acting first generations used to say, "Do you see yourself showing mercy to someone whose eyes are not pleased with your disobedience so much so that he knows that no eye sees him other than you?"

One of them said, "Son of Ādam, if when you perpetrate an act of disobedience it is disturbed by the eye of someone looking at you, but when you are alone with Allah it is clear for you to do an act of disobedience and you are not shy before Him with the modesty you would show before any of His creatures, then you are one of two people: if you think that He does not see you, you are a *kāfir*, and if you know that He sees you and that does not prevent you from doing what the presence of the weakest of His creatures

would prevent you from doing, then you have become emboldened and brazen towards Him."

Someone entered a thicket of trees and said, "If in this solitude I did an act of disobedience who would see me?" Then he heard an unseen voice which filled the thicket:



"Does He Who created not then know? He is the All-Pervading, the AllAware."[41]

Someone tried to seduce a bedouin Arab woman and he said to her, "No one sees us but the stars (*kawākib*)." She said, "Where is the One Who makes them shine (*Mukawkib*)?"

Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir saw a man standing talking to a woman and he said, "Allah sees you both, may Allah veil us and you both."

Al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī said, "Fearful watchfulness (*murāqabah*) is the heart's knowledge of the nearness of the Lord." Al-Junayd was asked about what would help one to lower the gaze and he said, "Your knowledge that Allah's gazing upon you precedes your

gazing upon that which you gaze upon." Imam Aḥmad used to recite:

> If you are alone with time one day, do not say 'I was alone' but rather say, 'There is a Watcher over me.'
> Do not reckon that Allah is forgetful for even an hourNor that what is concealed is absent with respect to Him.

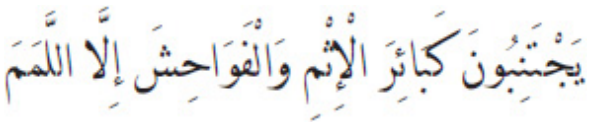
Ibn as-Sammāk used to recite:

> O addict of wrong action are you not ashamed, When in your solitude Allah is your second?
> His granting you respite has deceived you, And His veiling you through out your evil actions.

The meaning is that when the Prophet ﷺ counselled Muʿādh to have *taqwā* of Allah in secret and in public, he guided him to that which would help him to do that, which is that he should be shy before Allah as he would be before a man of some standing in his people. That means that he should always bring to consciousness Allah's nearness to him and His

watching over him and then he should be shy of His gaze upon him.

Muʿādh followed that which the Prophet ﷺ advised him. ʿUmar put him in charge of some work, and he came without anything. His wife criticised him, and he said, “I had One with me Who overcame me,” meaning someone who constrained him and prevented him from taking anything. Muʿādh only meant his Lord ﷻ but his wife thought that ʿUmar had sent a supervisor with him, and so she complained about him (ʿUmar) to people. Whoever’s state becomes like this always or most of the time is one of the people of *iḥsān* who worship Allah as if they see Him, and he is one of the people of *iḥsān* who:



“...[they] avoid the major wrong actions and indecencies – except for minor lapses”.[42]

In general, *taqwā* of Allah in secret and in public is the mark of complete *īmān*, and it has a tremendous effect in that Allah casts into the hearts of the *mu’minūn* to praise him. There is the hadith that, “Whenever a slave conceals a secret, Allah will

publicly dress him in its robe which if it (the secret) is good then it will be good, but which if it (the secret) is evil, then it will be evil."[43] This has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, and it has also been narrated from Ibn Masʿūd as his own words.

Abū'd-Dardā' said, "Let any of you beware that the hearts of the *mu'minūn* should curse him while he does not perceive it; when he disobeys Allah in secret and then Allah casts hatred for him in the hearts of the *mu'minūn*."

Sulaymān at-Taymī said, "A man may do a wrong action secretly and arise in the morning and its humiliation is upon him." Someone else said, "A slave may do a wrong action in that which is between him and Allah and then come to his brothers and they will see the traces of that on him, and this is one of the greatest proofs of the existence of the Real God who requites one for even the tiny apparently insignificant actions in the world before the next life, and no action of those who do them goes to waste. No veil or self-concealment is of any use against His power. The fortunate one is the one who puts right that which is between him and Allah, because for whoever puts things right between him and Allah, then Allah will

put things right between him and the creation. Whoever seeks the praise of people with that which earns the displeasure of Allah, then the person who praises him will come to blame him."

Abū Sulaymān said, "The real loser is the one who makes the rightness of his actions apparent to people, and shows his ugly actions to the One who is nearer to him than his jugular vein."

One of the most amazing things narrated in this context is that which is narrated from Abū Jaʿfar the traveller. He said, "Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad was a trader who rented out dirhams [at interest]. One day he passed by some children playing and one of them said to the others, 'Here is the one who takes usury.' He lowered his head in shame and said, 'My Lord, you have divulged my secret among the children.' He returned and collected together all of his property and said, 'My Lord, I am a prisoner. I buy myself from You with this property, so free me.' In the morning he gave all of his property away as *ṣadaqah* and took to worship. Then one day he passed by those children. When they saw him, one of them said to the others, 'Shut up! Ḥabīb the worshipper is here.' He wept and

said, ‘My Lord, sometimes You praise and sometimes You blame. It is all from You.’”

His saying ﷺ, “follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it.” Since the slave is commanded to have *taqwā* in private and in public despite the reality that he will unavoidably sometimes neglect *taqwā*, either by leaving out some things with which he is commanded or by doing some things which he is forbidden; so he commanded him to do that which would efface this wrong action, meaning that he should follow it up with a good action. Allah ﷻ says:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

“Establish *ṣalāh* at each end of the day and in the first part of the night. Good actions eradicate bad actions. This is a reminder for people who pay heed.”[44] There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn Masʿūd that, “A man snatched a kiss from a woman. Then later he came to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned that to him and the Prophet ﷺ was silent until this *āyah* was revealed. He called for him and recited the *āyah* to him. A man asked, ‘Is this for him

particularly?' He said, 'No, this is for people in general.'"[45]

Allah has described the people of *taqwā* in His Book with the like of that which the Prophet ﷺ advised in this piece of counsel, in His words ﷻ:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

"Race each other to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the people who have *taqwā*: those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people – Allah loves the good-doers – those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?) and do not knowingly persist in what they were doing. Their recompense is forgiveness from their Lord, and

Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever. How excellent is the reward of those who act!"[46]

He describes the people of *taqwā* as treating people well by spending on them, controlling their rage, and pardoning them, so that He combines together the description of them as being open-handedly generous and putting up with offence, which is the limit of good treatment of people and that which the Prophet ﷺ advised Muʿādh. Then He describes them as, "those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions," and that they do not persist in them. This shows that sometimes people of *taqwā* can do major wrong actions, i.e. indecencies, and minor wrong actions, i.e. they wrong themselves, but they do not persist in them, but rather they remember Allah right after they do them and seek His forgiveness (*maghfirah*)[47] and turn in *tawbah* to Him from them. *Tawbah* means to give up persisting in them.

The meaning of His words, "They remember Allah," is that they remember His greatness and the severity of His grasp and His revenge, and what punishment they are promised for disobedience. That

forces them to return immediately and seek Allah's forgiveness and to give up persisting. Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ

"As for those who have *taqwā*, when they are bothered by visitors from Shayṭān, they remember and immediately see clearly."[48]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave did a wrong action and said, 'My Lord, I have done a wrong action so forgive me,' so Allah says, 'My slave knows that he has no lord other than Me who forgives and punishes wrong actions, so I forgive My slave.' Then later he did another wrong action... until on the fourth occasion He said, 'Let him do what he wants,'"[49] meaning as long as he continues in this state that whenever he commits a wrong action he seeks Allah's forgiveness. There is in *at-Tirmidhī* from a hadith of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The one who seeks Allah's forgiveness is not persistent even if he repeats [the wrong action] seventy times in a day."[50]

Al-Ḥākim narrated from the hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said,

‘Messenger of Allah, one of us does a wrong action.’ He said, ‘It is recorded against him.’ He said, ‘Then later he seeks [Allah’s] forgiveness.’ He said, ‘He is forgiven and his *tawbah* accepted [by Allah].’ He said, ‘He returns and does another wrong action.’ He said, ‘It is recorded against him.’ He said, ‘Then later he seeks [Allah’s] forgiveness and turns in tawbah.’ He said, ‘He is forgiven and his *tawbah* accepted. Allah will not tire [of forgiving you] unless you tire [of seeking forgiveness].’”[51]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with a weak chain of transmission from ʿĀ’ishah ﵂ that she said, “Ḥabīb ibn al-Ḥārith came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, I am a man who perpetrates wrong actions.’ He said, ‘So turn in *tawbah* to Allah ﷻ.’ He said, ‘I turn in *tawbah* and then later I repeat.’ He said, ‘So as often as you do a wrong action then turn in tawbah.’ He said, ‘Messenger of Allah, in that case my wrong actions will become abundant?’ He said, ‘Allah’s pardoning is more than your wrong actions, Ḥabīb ibn al-Ḥārith.’”[52] He also narrated the same sense in a hadith of Anas as a *marfūʿ* hadith but with a weak chain of transmission, and with his chain of transmission from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that he said,

“Whoever remembers a wrong action he has done and his heart is afraid of it and he seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will not be taken to account for anything of them until he effaces them.”[53]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission from ʿAlī that he said, “The best of you are all those who are tried [by falling into wrong action] and who turn in tawbah.” Someone said, “What if he returns [to his wrong action]?” He said, “He must seek Allah’s forgiveness and turn in tawbah.” Someone said, “What if he returns [to his wrong action]?” He said, “He must seek Allah’s forgiveness and turn in tawbah.” Someone said, “What if he returns [to his wrong action]?” He said, “He must seek Allah’s forgiveness and turn in tawbah.” Someone said, “For how long?” He said, “Until Shayṭān is the one who is exhausted.”

Ibn Mājah narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that, “Someone who turns in *tawbah* from his wrong action is just the same as someone who has no wrong action.”[54]

Someone said to al-Ḥasan, “Should someone not be ashamed before his Lord to seek His forgiveness for his wrong actions and then repeat them, then seek Allah’s

covering forgiveness and then again repeat them?" He said, 'The Shayṭān loves that to become triumphant over you by this [attitude].' It is narrated from him that he said, "I only think that this is a part of the character of the *mu'minūn*," meaning that whenever the *mu'min* does a wrong action he turns in tawbah, and it has been narrated that, "The *mu'min* is tried [by wrong actions] and he turns repeatedly in tawbah."[55] It has been narrated in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Jābir with a weak chain of transmission that, "The *mu'min* is torn [like a garment] and he mends, so, fortunate is the one who perishes in the state of mending."[56]

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said in his *khuṭbah*, "Whoever of you does good action then let him praise Allah. Whoever does wrong action, let him seek Allah's forgiveness and turn in tawbah, because for some people there is no avoiding doing actions which Allah appointed as their destinies and which He has decreed for them." In another narration from him there is that he said, "Whoever does a wrong action, then let him seek Allah's forgiveness and turn in tawbah. Then if he repeats [the wrong] then let him seek Allah's forgiveness and turn in tawbah. Then if he repeats [the wrong] then let him seek Allah's

forgiveness and turn in tawbah, because they are only mistakes marked on men's necks, and total destruction lies in persistence upon them."

The meaning of this is that the slave will unavoidably do whatever wrong actions are decreed for him, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is decreed for the son of Ādam his portion of adultery, and he will meet that unavoidably."[57] However, Allah has made a way out for the slave from the wrong actions into which he falls, and he effaces them by turning in *tawbah* and seeking Allah's forgiveness. If he does that then he becomes free from the evil of his wrong action, and if he persists in that, he perishes.

There is in the *Musnad* in the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Show mercy and you will be shown mercy, forgive and you will be forgiven. Woe to those who are funnels for speech. Woe to the persistent, those who persist in what they are doing knowingly."[58] "Those who are funnels of speech" is explained as referring to those whose hearing is like a funnel for the wisdom and good admonition he hears, so that when any of that enters one ear, it goes out through the other and he doesn't benefit from anything which he hears.

His saying ﷺ, “and follow up a wrong action with a good action” sometimes *tawbah* from that wrong action is meant by good action, which has been narrated clearly in the *mursal* hadith which Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated among the *mursal* hadith of Muḥammad ibn Jubayr, that when the Prophet ﷺ sent Muʿādh to the Yemen he said, “Muʿādh, have *taqwā* of Allah as much as you are able and act according to your strength for the sake of Allah ﷻ as much as you have energy for, and remember Allah ﷻ at every tree and stone, and if you do a wrong action then with it turn from it in tawbah, privately if it was done in private and publicly if it was public.” Abū Nuʿaym[59] narrated it in the same sense, in another way which is weak, from Muʿādh. Qatādah said that Salmān said, “If you do a wrong action privately, then do a good action privately. If you do a wrong action publicly, then do a good action publicly, so that this one will be in place of this one.” It is possible he means by the good action *tawbah*, or [a meaning] more general than that.

Allah informs us in many places in His Book that whoever turns in *tawbah* from his wrong action, He will forgive him his wrong action or his *tawbah* will be accepted, such as in His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ فَأُوْلَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ

"Allah only accepts the *tawbah* of those who do evil in ignorance and then quickly make *tawbah* after doing it. Allah turns towards such people."[60] And His words:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُواْ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُواْ مِن بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُواْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِن بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

"But to those who do evil in ignorance and then after that make *tawbah* and put things right, to them your Lord is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful."[61] And His words:

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً فَأُوْلَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ

"except for those who make *tawbah* and have *īmān* and act rightly: Allah will transform the wrong actions of such people into good."[62] And His words:

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى

"But I am Ever-Forgiving to anyone who makes *tawbah* and has *īmān* and acts rightly and then is

guided."[63] And His words:

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

"except for those who make *tawbah* and have *īmān* and act rightly. They will enter the Garden and they will not be wronged in any way."[64] And His words:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

"those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?),"[65] the two *āyāt*.

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq said, "Jaʿfar ibn Sulaymān told us from Thābit that Anas ﷺ said, 'It has reached me that Iblīs wept when this *āyah* was revealed, "those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions."'"[66] It is transmitted that Ibn Masʿūd said, "This *āyah* is better for the people of wrong actions than the world and everything that is in it." Ibn Sīrīn said, "Allah gave us this *āyah* [something] in place of

those acts of atonement for wrong actions which He gave to the Children of Isrā'īl."

Abū Jaʿfar ar-Rāzī related from ar-Rabīʿ ibn Anas from Abū'l-ʿAliyyah that he said, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, if only our acts of atonement were like the acts of atonement of the Children of Isrā'īl.' So the Prophet ﷺ said three times, 'O Allah we do not desire it. Theat which Allah gave you is better than that which He gave the Children of Isrā'īl: if any of the Children of Isrā'īl did a wrong action he would find it written on his door along with the atonement for it, so that if he atoned for it, it was a humiliation for him in the world, and if he did not atone for it, it was a humiliation for him in the next world. What Allah gave you is better than what he gave the Children of Isrā'īl. He says, 'Anyone who does evil or wrongs himself and then asks Allah's forgiveness will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'[67]"[68]

Ibn ʿAbbās spoke about His words, exalted is He:

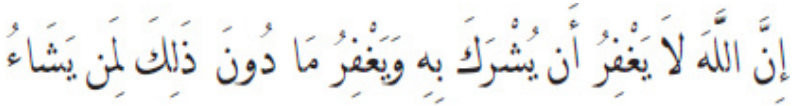
وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

"and He has not placed any constraint upon you in the *dīn*,"[69] and he said, "It is the vastness of Islam, and

the *tawbah* and atonement which Allah appointed for the ummah of Muḥammad."

The apparent outward meaning of these texts shows that whoever turns to Allah wholly sincerely, and the conditions of *tawbah* are all fulfilled in him, then one can assert that Allah will accept his *tawbah* just as one can assert the acceptability of the Islam of the *kāfir* when he submits authentically in Islam. This is the position of the great majority and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's words indicate that it is the consensus.

Some people say that one cannot assert the acceptance of *tawbah*, but rather that it is hoped for and the person who makes *tawbah* is subject to the will [of Allah] even if he turns in *tawbah*. They sought to prove that by His words:



"Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him but He forgives whomever He wills for anything other than that,"[70] and so He placed all wrong actions subject to His will. They also probably sought to prove that by the like of His words, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحاً عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ

"You who have *īmān*! make *tawbah* to Allah. It may be that your Lord will erase your bad actions from you,"[71] and His words:

فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً فَعَسَى أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ

"But as for those who make *tawbah* and act rightly, they will hopefully be successful,"[72] and His words:

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعاً أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"Turn to Allah every one of you, *mu'minūn*, so that hopefully you will have success,"[73] and His words:

وَآخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُواْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُواْ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وَآخَرَ سَيِّئاً عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ

"But others have acknowledged their wrong actions and mixed a right action with another which is wrong. It may well be that Allah will turn towards them."[74] The apparent outward meaning of this is that it is with respect to the one who turns in *tawbah* because acknowledgement requires regret. There is in the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When the

slave acknowledges his wrong action and then turns in *tawbah*, Allah turns to him."[75] The authentic and right position is that of the larger group.

These *āyāt* do not disprove asserting [that *tawbah* is accepted], because when the Generous makes one desire and long for something He does not sever one's hopes from that which is desired. For this reason, Ibn ʿAbbās said, "The word ʿasā (perhaps, hopefully) from Allah is obligatory." ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah transmitted it from him.[76] The reward for *īmān* and right action has also been mentioned with the word "hopefully", but that does not show that it is not something that can be asserted, such as in His words:

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلاَةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلاَّ اللَّهَ فَعَسَى أُوْلَئِكَ أَن يَكُونُواْ مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

"The mosques of Allah should only be frequented by those who have *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day and establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*, and fear no one but Allah. They are the ones most likely (ʿasā) to be guided."[77] As for in His words:

وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ

"He forgives whomever He wills for anything other than that,"[78] then the one who turns in *tawbah* is one of those whom He wills to forgive, as He informed us in many places in His Book.

It may be that by "good action" in the words of the Prophet ﷺ "follow up a wrong action with a good action" something more general is meant than turning in *tawbah*, as in His words, exalted is He:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفاً مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

"Establish *ṣalāh* at each end of the day and in the first part of the night. Good actions eradicate bad actions."[79] It has been narrated in a hadith of Muʿādh that the Prophet ﷺ told the man concerning whom this *āyah* was revealed to perform *wuḍū'* and pray.[80]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah narrated from a hadith of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If any man who has done a wrong action stands, purifies himself [by *wuḍū'* or *ghusl*], prays and seeks forgiveness from Allah, then Allah will forgive him." Then he recited, "Those who, when they act indecently or wrong

themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions."[81] [82]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from ʿUthmān that he performed *wuḍū'* and then said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performing *wuḍū'* just like this *wuḍū'* of mine and then he said, 'Whoever performs *wuḍū'* like this *wuḍū'* of mine and prays two *rakʿahs* without talking to himself in them, all of his earlier errors will be forgiven.'"[83]

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is that Abū'd-Dardā' said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'Whoever performs *wuḍū'* and does his *wuḍū'* well and then stands and performs two *rakʿahs* or four in which he shows excellence in the bowing well and humility, and then asks Allah ﷻ toforgiven him, he will be forgiven.'"[84]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that Anas said, "I was with the Prophet ﷺ and a man came to him. He said, 'Messenger of Allah, I have [done something which requires a] hadd punishment, so please have it applied to me.'" He [Anas] said, "He did not ask him about it. Then it came time for the prayer and he prayed with the Prophet ﷺ. When the Prophet ﷺ was finished the man stood before him and said,

‘Messenger of Allah, I have [done something which requires a] hadd punishment so please have the obligatory [punishment] of Allah applied to me.’ He said, ‘Have you not prayed with us?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘Then Allah has covered over your wrong action for you,’ or he said, ‘your [wrong action which required a] *ḥadd* punishment’.”[85] Muslim narrated it in the same sense from a hadith of Abū Umāmah.[86] Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated it by another way from Abū Umāmah, and in this hadith he said, “‘Really, in relation to your wrong action you are as when your mother gave birth to you, so do not repeat it,’ and Allah revealed, ‘Establish *ṣalāh* at each end of the day and in the first part of the night. Good actions eradicate bad actions.’”[87]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ asked, “Do you think that if there were a river before any of your doors in which he washed five times a day anything of his uncleanliness would remain?’ They said, ‘Nothing of his uncleanliness would remain.’ He said, ‘That is the metaphor of the five prayers; Allah effaces wrong actions by them.’”[88]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿUthmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever performs *wuḍū*’ and does it well, then his wrong actions will go out from his body even to the extent that they will leave from beneath his nails.”[89] There is also in it from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ asked, “Shall I not show you that by which Allah effaces wrong actions and raises [people] up in ranks?” They said, “Yes, of course, Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Completing *wuḍū*’ fully in difficult circumstances, and taking many steps to the mosques, and waiting for a prayer after a prayer, for that is *ribāṭ*, that is *ribāṭ*.”[90] [91]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever fasts Ramaḍān with *īmān* and anticipating [a reward] will have any earlier wrong actions forgiven, and whoever stands [in prayer at night] in Ramaḍān with *īmān* and antipating [a reward] will have any earlier wrong actions forgiven him; and whoever [in prayer at night] on the Night of the Decree (*Laylat al-Qadr*) with *īmān* and antipating [a reward] will have any earlier wrong actions forgiven him.”[92] There is in both of them from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever performs the Ḥajj of this House and does not have

sexual intercourse[93] and does no wrongdoing comes away from his wrong actions as the day on which his mother gave birth to him."[94]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Islam demolishes what was before it, and emigration demolishes what was before it, and Ḥajj demolishes what was before it." There is in it the hadith of Abū Qatādah that the Prophet ﷺ said about fasting ʿĀshūrā', "I anticipate from Allah that it will atone for the year which precedes it." He said about fasting on the Day of ʿArafah, "I anticipate from Allah that it will atone for the year which precedes it and the one which follows it."

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The simile of the one who does wrong actions and then does right actions is like that of a man upon whom there is a tight coat of mail which is strangling him, and then he does a good action and a ring [of the chain mail] is loosened, then he does another good action and another ring is loosened until he steps out of it on to the ground."[95]

One of the things which erases wrong action is remembrance of Allah ﷻ. We have mentioned previously that the Prophet ﷺ, "Was asked whether

the saying, ‘There is no god but Allah’ is one of the good actions and he said, ‘It is the best of the good actions.’” There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

‘Glorious is Allah and in His praise’ one hundred times a day will have his wrong actions removed from him even if they are like the foam of the sea.”[96] There is also in them from him that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says:

لَآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ،يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

‘There is no god but Allah alone without partner to Him. His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He gives life and He gives death, and He is able to do anything’ one hundred times in a day, then it will be for him the equivalent of freeing ten slaves, and one hundred good actions will be written for him, one hundred wrong actions will be erased for him, and it will be a protection for him from *shayṭān* for that day of his until the evening. No one will produce anything better

than that which he produces except for someone who does more than that."[97]

There is in the *Musnad* and in the book of Ibn Mājah from Umm Hāni' that the Prophet ﷺ said,

لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

"'There is no god but Allah' leaves no wrong action, and no action has precedence over it."[98] At-Tirmidhī narrated from Anas from the Prophet ﷺ that, "He passed by a tree whose leaves were dry, and he struck it with his staff so that the leaves fell off and scattered. He said, 'Truly,

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

"Praise belongs to Allah," "Glorious is Allah, "There is no god but Allah" and "Allah is greater" cause the slave's wrong actions to fall away from him just as the leaves of the tree fall from it.'"[99]

Imam Aḥmad narrated with a sound chain of transmission from Anas that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Truly:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، لآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

‘Glorious is Allah,’ ‘Praise belongs to Allah,’ ‘There is no god but Allah’ and ‘Allah is greater’ shake off wrong actions just as the tree sheds its leaves.”[100] The hadith with this meaning are very numerous and the book would become very lengthy if they were to be mentioned.

Al-Ḥasan was asked about a man who would not shun acts of disobedience but his tongue would not cease mentioning Allah and he said, “That is a good aid.”

Imam Aḥmad was asked whether the prayer and glorification of a man who earned property from a dubious source would remove any of that, and he said, “If he prays and glorifies intending that, then I hope so. Allah, exalted is He, says:

خَلَطُواْ عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وَآخَرَ سَيِّئاً عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ

“... and they mixed a right action with another which is wrong. It may well be that Allah will turn towards them.”[101]

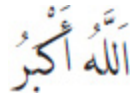
Mālik ibn Dīnār said, “Weeping over a wrong action removes wrong actions just as the wind removes dry leaves.”

ʿAṭā’ said, “Whoever sits in one of the assemblies of *dhikr* erases ten assemblies of vanity by it.”

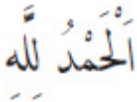
Shuways al-ʿAdawī, one of the early Followers, said, “The companion on the right [the recording angel] is in charge of,” or he said, “entrusted with the companion on the left. When the son of Ādam does a wrong action and the companion of the left hand wants to write it down, the companion of the right hand says to him, ‘Do not be hasty. It is very likely that he will do a good action.’ If he does a good action then he casts [away] one [right action] for one [wrong action] and so records nine right actions for him [since the right action is recorded ten-fold and the wrong action is only recorded as a single wrong action]. Then *shayṭān* says, ‘Woe to him! Who can overtake the multiplication [of the rewards] of the son of Ādam?’”

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated, with a chain of transmission about which there are views, from Abū Mālik al-Ashʿarī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When the son of Ādam sleeps the angel says to the *shayṭān*, ‘Give me your page,’ and he will give it to him. With the good

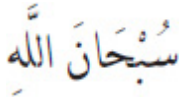
that he finds in it he will expunge ten wrong actions from the page of the *shayṭān* which he will write down as good actions. So if any of you lie down to sleep then let him say



‘Allah is greater’ thirty-three times,



‘Praise belongs to Allah’ thirty-four times, and



‘Glorious is Allah’ thirty-three times, and that is a hundred [in all].”[102] But this is unusual[103] and is rejected.[104]

Wakīʿ narrated, “Al-Aʿmash narrated to us from Abū Isḥāq from Abū’l-Aḥwaṣ that he said, ʿAbdullāh said,’ meaning Ibn Masʿūd, ‘I would like to have been offered the contract that I should do nine wrong actions every day and one right action.’” This is an indication from him that nine wrong actions are expunged by one right action and that there remains

one reward for a good action, which would be sufficient for him, and Allah knows best.

People differ about two matters: first, whether right actions erase both major and minor wrong actions or only erase minor wrong actions? Some say that they only expunge minor wrong actions. This has been narrated from ʿAṭā' and others from the right-acting first generations with regards to *wuḍū'* that it erases minor wrong actions. Salmān al-Farisi said about *wuḍū'*, "It erases minor injuries, and walking to the mosque erases greater than that, and the prayer erases greater than that." Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated it.[105]

As for major wrong actions, one has to turn in *tawbah* from them because Allah orders slaves to turn in *tawbah*, and He designates those who do not turn in *tawbah* as 'wrongdoers'. The community agree unanimously that turning in *tawbah* is obligatory, and that obligations are only discharged by intention and purpose. If major wrong actions were to be erased by *wuḍū'* and prayer and by the discharge of the rest of the pillars of Islam then they would not need turning in *tawbah*, and there is unanimous agreement that this is false.

Also, if major wrong actions were erased by obligatory actions no wrong action would remain to enter anyone in the Fire if he did the obligatory actions, which resembles the position of the Murji'ah, and that is false. This is what Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr mentioned in his book *at-Tamhīd* and he said that there is unanimous agreement of the Muslims on that and sought to prove it by many hadith, of which there is his words ﷺ:

"The five prayers, and the Jumuʿah until the [next] Jumuʿah, and Ramaḍān until the [next] Ramaḍān erase whatever is between them as long as the major wrong actions are avoided,"[106] which is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah, and which shows that these obligatory acts do not erase major wrong actions.

Ibn ʿAṭiyyah narrated in his *tafsīr* two statements on the meaning of this hadith:

First, that which he narrated as the position of the majority of the people of the Sunnah, that avoiding major wrong actions is a condition for these obligatory acts erasing minor wrong actions, so that if one does not avoid them, then the obligatory acts do not erase anything at all.

Second, that they erase minor wrong actions absolutely and without any qualification, but that they do not erase major wrong actions if they exist. However, it is stipulated that one must turn in *tawbah* from minor wrong actions and not persist in them. He considered this statement the weightiest and he quoted it from the proficient [people of knowledge].

His saying [in Ibn ʿAṭiyyah's quote above]: "it is stipulated that one must turn in *tawbah* from minor wrong actions and not persist in them," means that if he persists in them they become major [wrong actions] and so good actions do not erase them.

The first opinion that he narrated is unusual although the like of it has been narrated from Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Jaʿfar from our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs].

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from ʿUthmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If the time of the obligatory prayer comes for any Muslim man and he does its *wuḍū*' well, its humility and its bowing, it will erase the wrong actions which preceded it as long as he had not done a major wrong action, and that is for all time."[107]

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from Salmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If a man purifies

himself [i.e. *ghusl*]," meaning on the day of the Jumuʿah, "and does his purification well, then goes to the Jumuʿah and is silent until the imam has finished the prayer, it is an expiation for him for whatever is between it and the coming Jumuʿah as long as he avoids mortal wrong actions."[108]

An-Nasā'ī, Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Ḥākim narrated the hadith of Abū Saʿīd and Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "By the One in Whose hand is my self! any slave who prays the five prayers, fasts Ramaḍān, pays the *zakāh*, and avoids the seven major wrong actions will have the doors of the Garden opened for him, and then it will be said to him, 'Enter in peace'."[109] Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī also narrated a hadith of Abū Ayyūb from the Prophet ﷺ with the same meaning. Al-Ḥākim narrated the same sense in a hadith of ʿUbayd ibn 'Umayr from his father from the Prophet ﷺ. It is narrated in a *marfūʿ* hadith from Ibn ʿUmar, "Allah ﷻ says, 'Son of Ādam, remember Me at the beginning of the day for a while, and at the end of the day for a while, I will forgive you whatever is in between that except for the major wrong actions, or you should turn in *tawbah* from them.'"[110]

Ibn Masʿūd said, “The five prayers erase what is between them as long as the major wrong actions are avoided.”

Salmān said, “Guard these five prayers because they erase these injurious actions as long as you do not do mortal wrong actions.”[111] Ibn ʿUmar asked a man, “Do you fear the Fire lest you enter it, and do you love the Garden and that you should enter it?” He said, “Yes.” He said, “Treat your mother well, for by Allah, if you speak gently to her and feed her, you will definitely enter the Garden as long as you avoid the actions which require [punishment].” Qatādah said, “Allah only promises forgiveness to whoever avoids major wrong actions,” and he mentioned to us that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Avoid major wrong actions, stay on the straignt path and rejoice.”

Some people of hadith and others, of whom there was Ibn Ḥazm aẓ-Ẓāhirī, took the position that these actions erase major wrong actions and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr concerned himself with refuting him in his book *at-Tamhīd*. He said, “I would myself have preferred not to talk about this subject if it had not been for the words of that person. I was afraid that ignorant people would be deceived by it and so indulge themselves in mortal

wrong actions relying on their being erased by the prayers without need for regret, seeking forgiveness and turning in *tawbah*, and We ask Allah for protection and success."

I say that this has occurred in the words of a party of the people of hadith on the subject of *wuḍū'* and the like, and similar things have occurred in the words of Ibn al-Mundhir on standing in prayer on the Night of the Decree (*Laylat al-Qadr*). He said, "It is hoped for whoever stands throughout it that all his wrong actions, both those which are major and those which are minor, will be forgiven." If they meant that someone who does the obligations of Islam while persisting in major wrong actions will be forgiven his wrong actions categorically, then this is completely false, and it is obvious from the *dīn* that it is false. We have previously heard his words ﷺ "Whoever does wrong in Islam will be taken to task for the first and the last," meaning for his actions in the Time of Ignorance and in Islam. This is too obvious to need explanation.

If the person who says this means that someone who gives up persisting in major wrong actions and guards his obligations without turning in *tawbah* or

showing regret about what he had done will have all his major wrong actions erased by that and he seeks to prove it by the apparent outward meaning of His words, exalted is He:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

"If you avoid the serious wrong actions (*sayyi'āt*) you have been forbidden, We will erase your bad actions from you and admit you by a Gate of Honour,"[112] saying that *sayyi'āt* comprise the major and the minor wrong actions and that just as the minor wrong actions are erased by avoiding the major wrong actions without purposing or intending that, it is similar with the major wrong actions, and he draws as a supporting argument that Allah promises to cover over the wrong actions of the *mu'minūn* and the people of *taqwā* and to erase their major wrong actions, which is mentioned in more than one place in the Qur'ān, and that this person under consideration is perhaps one of the people of *taqwā* because he does the obligatory actions and avoids major wrong actions, and avoiding major wrong actions does not require an intention or purpose; then [in the case of this second

meaning] it is possible to take this position in principle.

The truth is that which the majority say, which is that major wrong actions are not erased without turning in *tawbah*, because turning in *tawbah* is obligatory on the slaves [of Allah]. Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُوْلَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"Those people who do not turn [in *tawbah*] are wrongdoers."[113] The Companions, such as ʿUmar, ʿAlī and Ibn Masʿūd explained *tawbah* as 'regret', and some of them explained it as resolving never to repeat [the wrong action], and that has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith but in a manner which has some weakness in it, but however, it is not known that any of the Companions, nor the Followers and those after them, such as ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, al-Ḥasan and others, disagreed about this.

As for the many texts guaranteeing forgiveness of wrong actions and the erasure of serious wrong actions for the people of *taqwā*, such as His words, exalted is He:

إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ

"If you have *taqwā* of Allah, He will give you discrimination and erase your bad actions from you and forgive you,"[114] and His words, exalted is He:

وَمَن يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

"As for those who have *īmān* in Allah and act rightly, We will erase their bad actions from them and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them,"[115] and His words

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا

"Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will erase his bad actions from him and greatly increase his reward,"[116] then He did not explain in these *āyāt* the attributes of *taqwā* nor right action, a part of which is turning with complete sincerity in *tawbah* and whoever does not turn in *tawbah* is a wrongdoer and not a person of *taqwā* [therefore these *āyāt* do not apply to him].

He explains in Sūrah Āl ʿImrān the attributes of *taqwā* which bring about the forgiveness of their possessors and enter them in the Garden, and mentioned of them: seeking forgiveness, not persisting, and He only guarantees to erase major wrong actions and forgive wrong actions in general to those who have this description, and Allah knows best.

One of those things which are used to show that major wrong actions are not erased without turning in *tawbah* from them or being punished for them is the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit. He said, "We were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said, 'Pledge allegiance to me on the basis that you will not associate anything as a partner with Allah, you will not steal, nor commit adultery,' – and he recited the *āyah* to them – 'And so whoever of you fulfils [his pledge] then his reward is up to Allah." Whoever commits any of that and is punished for it then that is an erasure [of that deed] for him. Whoever commits any of that and Allah veils him for it, then it is up to Allah; if He wishes He will punish him and if He wishes He will forgive him.'"[117] Both of them narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books. In the narration of Muslim there is that, "Whoever of you does [something which

contravenes] the limits [of Islam] and he is punished for it, then that is his atonement." This shows that the [*ḥadd* punishments for contravening the] limits are acts of expiation and atonement. Ash-Shāfiʿī said, "I have not heard anything better in this section on the *ḥadd* punishment being acts of expiation and atonement for the people who do them than the hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit."

His words, "and he is punished for it" comprises the punishments of the *Sharīʿah*, which are those that have a specific measure and those that do not have a specific measure, such as the discretionary punishments called *taʿzīr*, and it also comprises those punishments which come about through destiny such as misfortunes, illnesses and pain, because it is authentically established that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If fatigue, disease, worry, or grief strike a Muslim, even a thorn which pricks him, then Allah erases his wrong actions by means of it."[118] It is narrated from ʿAlī that, for the one upon whom they are executed, the *ḥadd* punishment erases the wrong actions.[119] Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī mentioned a disagreement that people have over this issue, but he gave more weight to the view that the execution of a punishment for contravening

the limits in itself erases major wrong actions, and he regarded the opposing argument as extremely weak.

I say that it has been narrated from Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and Ṣafwān ibn Sulaym that the execution of a *ḥadd* punishment does not erase major wrong actions and that it must be accompanied by turning in *tawbah*, and a group of later scholars, among them al-Baghawī and Abū ʿAbdullāh ibn Taymiyyah in their *tafsīr*, regarded it as the more weighty view, and it is also the position of Ibn Ḥazm aẓ-Ẓāhirī, whereas the former position is that of Mujāhid, Zayd ibn Aslam, ath-Thawrī and Aḥmad.

As for the *marfūʿ* hadith from Abū Hurayrah, "I do not know whether the punishment for contravening the limits is a purification for its people or not," al-Ḥākim and others narrated it,[120] but al-Bukhārī regarded it as faulty and he said, "It is not reliable [as a hadith]. It is only one of the *mursal* hadith of az-Zuhrī, and they are weak, and ʿAbd ar-Razzāq made a mistake when he regarded it as being connected [directly back to the Prophet ﷺ with an unbroken chain of transmission]." He said, "It is authentically established from the Prophet ﷺ that the *ḥadd* punishments erase [major wrong actions]."

One of those things by which those who say that the *ḥadd* punishment does not erase major wrong actions take proof is His words, exalted is He, about those who wage war:

ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ

"That will be their degradation in the dunyā and in the *ākhirah* they will have a terrible punishment, except for those who make *tawbah* before you gain power over them."[121] The outward meaning is that they have both the punishments of the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*. That is answered by saying that their punishment in the *dunyā* and their punishment in the *ākhirah* are both mentioned but it is not necessary that they are united [i.e. both executed]. As for the exception, "except for those who make *tawbah*", they are only excepted from the punishment of the *dunyā*, because the punishment of the *ākhirah* is dropped both before power is gained over them and after that.

As for his words ﷺ, "Whoever commits any of that and Allah veils him for it, then it is up to Allah; if He wishes He will punish him and if He wishes He will forgive him," is a clear declaration concerning major

wrong actions that whoever meets Allah with them [without having turned in *tawbah*], then it is up to His will. This shows that the establishment of the obligations does not atone for them and does not erase them, since the generality of the Muslims guard the obligations, most particularly those who the Prophet ﷺ took a pledge of allegiance from. The one who meets Allah having turned in *tawbah* from them is excepted from that, because of clear texts in the Book and the Sunnah showing that whoever turns in *tawbah* to Allah, Allah turns to him and forgives him. Thus, those who do not turn in *tawbah* remain subject to the will [of Allah].

Also, that deeds do not erase major wrong actions is shown by the fact that Allah has not appointed acts of atonement in the world for major wrong actions, but has only appointed acts of atonement for minor wrong actions such as having sexual intercourse with a wife from whom one has declared the *ẓihār* divorce or having sexual intercourse with a wife during her menstrual period according to the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās which Imam Aḥmad and others based themselves on,[122] and the atonement for someone who leaves out any of the necessary parts of the Ḥajj, or does

something during it which is forbidden to do during Ḥajj. They [atonements] are four types: sacrificing [an animal], freeing a slave, *ṣadaqah*, and fasting. For this reason there is no atonement necessary for intentional homicide according to the majority of the people of knowledge, nor for a false oath by which someone else's property is obtained according to most of them, but the killer is only commanded to free a slave as a recommended action as is narrated in the hadith of Wāthilah ibn al-Asqaʿ that, "They came to the Prophet ﷺ about a friend of theirs who had done a major wrong action (*awjaba*), and he said, 'On his behalf free a slave, in order that Allah might free him because of that from the Fire.'"[123] The meaning of *awjaba* (he made it necessary or obligatory) is that he did an action because of which he would necessarily have to go to the Fire. It is said that he had killed someone. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Ibn ʿUmar struck a slave of his and so he freed him and said, "There is no reward for me in it, even as much as this," and he picked up a piece of wood from the ground [and said], "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, 'Whoever slapped his slave violently or struck him, then his act of atonement is to free him.'"[124]

If someone says that the person who has sexual intercourse during the daytime in Ramaḍān is commanded to atone for it, whereas breaking the fast during the daytime in Ramaḍān is a major wrong action, then it must be said that the atonement is not for the act of breaking the fast, and for this reason it is not required of everyone who intentionally breaks the fast [before the time] in Ramaḍān, according to the majority of the people of knowledge, but it [the atonement] is only for the violation of the sanctity of the daytime of Ramaḍān by sexual intercourse. For this reason, even if he were to break the fast in a way which was not permitted for him during the daytime of Ramaḍān, then later he had sexual intercourse he would be required to perform the act of atonement according to Imam Aḥmad because of what we have mentioned.

Another matter that shows that the atonement for duties is confined to minor wrong actions is that which al-Bukhārī narrated from Ḥudhayfah. He said, “While we were sitting with ʿUmar he asked, ‘Which of you has memorised the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the trial (*fitnah*)?’” He said, “I said, ‘The trial that a man experiences in his family, his wealth, his children

and his neighbour is atoned for by prayer, fasting, commanding the right and forbidding the wrong.' He said, 'It was not about this that I was asking.'" Muslim narrated the same sense. The apparent sense of the context of the hadith requires that it is a *marfūʿ* hadith. In a version of al-Bukhārī there is that Ḥudhayfah said, "I heard him saying, 'The trial of a man...'" and this is a clear declaration that it was heard directly [from the Prophet ﷺ]. In a version of Muslim there is that these were ʿUmar's words.[125]

As for the words of the Prophet ﷺ to the one who said to him, "I have [done something which requires a] *ḥadd* punishment so please have it applied to me," but he left him alone until he had prayed and then he said to him, "Allah has forgiven you your *ḥadd*," then this is still not a clear statement that what is meant is anything of the major wrong actions since the limits of Allah are those things He has forbidden, as in His words, exalted is He:

وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

"Those are Allah's limits, and anyone who oversteps Allah's limits has wronged himself,"[126] and

His words:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا

“These are Allah’s limits so do not overstep them,”[127] and His words:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ . . . وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَاراً خَالِداً فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

“These are Allah’s limits. As for those who obey Allah and His Messenger, We will admit them into Gardens” ... up to His words, “As for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and overstep His limits, We will admit them into a Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. They will have a humiliating punishment.”[128] There is in the hadith of al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah[129] from the Prophet ﷺ concerning the simile of Islam as the straight path on whose two edges were two walls, and he said, “The two walls are the limits of Allah,” and it has earlier been mentioned in full.

Everyone who does one of those things that are forbidden by Allah has contravened His limits, committed it and overstepped it. On the assumption that the limit which this man had contravened was a

major wrong action, then this man came full of regret and turning in *tawbah*, ready to submit himself to the execution of the punishment upon him, and regret is an act of turning in *tawbah*, and without hesitation [we say that] turning in *tawbah* erases major wrong actions.[130] That which would suggest that major wrong actions are erased and atoned for by right actions has also been narrated. Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī both narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Messenger of Allah, I have done a tremendous wrong action, is there any way for me to turn in *tawbah*?' He said, 'Do you have a mother [who is still alive]?' He said, 'No.' He said, 'Do you have a maternal aunt?' He said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Then treat her well.'"[131] Ibn Ḥibbān narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and al-Ḥākim and he said that it was according to the conditions [for the authenticity of a hadith of] the two Shaykhs [al-Bukhārī and Muslim]. However, at-Tirmidhī narrated it in another way as a *mursal* hadith and he mentioned that the *mursal* transmission is more sound than the one which is connected back without a break in its chain of transmission. ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī and ad-Dāraquṭnī said the same.

It is narrated from ʿUmar that a man said to him, “I killed someone.” He asked, “Is you mother alive?” He said, “No.” He asked, “Then your father?” He said, “Yes.” He said, “Then show concern for his welfare and treat him well.” Later ʿUmar said, “If his mother had been alive and he had shown solicitous concern for her welfare and had treated her well, I would have hoped that the Fire would never taste him.” A similar meaning is transmitted from Ibn ʿAbbās.

Similarly, the woman who used to practise magic at Dawmat al-Jandal came to Madīnah asking how she could turn in *tawbah*. She found that the Prophet ﷺ had died. His Companions said to her, “If your parents were alive or even one of them [and you were to show concern for their well-being and treat them well] they would be enough for you.” Al-Ḥākim narrated it[132] and he said, “In it is the unanimous agreement of the Companions shortly after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that solicitous concern for the well-being of her parents would have been sufficient for her [as an act of *tawbah*].” *Makḥūl* and Imam Aḥmad both said, “Solicitous concern for the well-being of parents is a means for the erasure of major wrong actions.” It has been narrated from some of the right-acting first

generations that carrying the body of a dead person to the grave removes major wrong actions, and that has been narrated as a *marfūᶜ* hadith in ways which are not sound.

There is an authentic transmission from Abū Burdah that when death came to Abū Mūsā he said, "My children, remember the story of the man with the small loaf of bread. He was a man who used to worship in his cell, I think for seventy years, and then *shayṭān* appeared him in the form of a woman, and he spent seven days and nights with her. Then the veil was removed from his eyes and he went out turning in *tawbah*." Then he mentioned that he spent the night among some poor people. Someone gave them small loaves of bread as a *ṣadaqah*, and they gave him a loaf, but his companion who had been given one lost it. When he learnt that, he gave him the loaf and then he died. The seventy years [of worship] were weighed against the seven nights, and the seven nights were found to be weightier. Then the loaf of bread was weighed against the seven nights, and the loaf was found to be weightier.[133]

Ibn al-Mubārak narrated with its chain of transmission in the book *al-Birr wa'ṣ-ṣilah* (Solicitous

Concern for the Well-being of Others and Joining Ties of Relationship) from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, “A man worshipped Allah for seventy years and then he committed an indecency and so Allah invalidated his deeds. Then a protracted illness struck him and he was invalided. He saw a man giving *ṣadaqah* to the poor, he came to him and took a loaf of bread from him and himself gave it as *ṣadaqah* to a poor person. Allah forgave him and returned his seventy years of deeds to him.”

In all of this there is no proof of the erasure of major wrong actions simply by means of action, since everyone mentioned in the foregoing regretted [the wrong they had done] and turned in *tawbah* from the wrong action. The issue [in their cases] was of right action by means of which to draw nearer to Allah after turning in *tawbah* so that He might entirely erase all trace of the wrong action by it, because Allah stipulates for the acceptance of *tawbah* and forgiveness for wrong actions that it be accompanied by right action such as in His words:

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا

"...except for those who make *tawbah* and have *īmān* and act rightly,"[134] and His words:

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى

"But I am Ever-Forgiving to anyone who makes *tawbah* and has *īmān* and acts rightly,"[135] and His words:

فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَعَسَى أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ

"But as for those who make *tawbah*, have *īmān* and act rightly, they will hopefully be successful."[136] There is in this a connection, to the one who says that after his *tawbah* the person who has turned in *tawbah* from his wrong action is subject to the will [of Allah], and this was the state of many of those who were fearful from among the right-acting first generations. One of them asked a man, "Have you done a wrong action?" He said, "Yes." He asked, "So you know that Allah has written it against you?" He said, "Yes." He said, "So work until you know that Allah has erased it." An example of it is the saying of Ibn Masʿūd, "The *mu'min* sees his wrong actions as if he were at the foot of a mountain which he fears will fall on top of him. The

degenerate person sees his wrong actions as if they were a fly flying above his nose," and he said this about it. Al-Bukhārī narrated it.[137]

They used to be suspicious of their [own] deeds and their *tawbah* and they would fear that it would not be accepted from them, which necessarily caused them extreme fear, and great diligent exertion in right action. Al-Ḥasan said, "I came upon a people who, even if any of them were to spend everything that is on the earth, he would not have felt secure because of the awe he had of wrong action in himself." Ibn ʿAwn said, "Do not trust in a great deal of action because you do not know if it has been accepted or not. Do not feel secure about your wrong actions because you do not know if they have been erased for you or not. All of your action is hidden from you."

What is most obvious, and Allah knows best, on this issue, meaning the issue of erasure of great wrong actions through deeds is that if by it is meant that major wrong actions are erased merely by the enactment of the obligatory actions and that major wrong actions are atoned for and erased by that just as minor wrong actions are erased by avoiding major wrong actions, then this is wrong. If what is meant is

that, on the Day of Rising, major wrong actions are weighed against some of the actions and that the major wrong actions are erased by corresponding deeds, and that then the deeds are dropped and no reward remains for them, then this may happen.

We have seen previously from Ibn ʿUmar that when he set free his slave whom he had struck he said, "There is no reward for me in it at all," since it was an atonement for his wrong action, even though his action was not a major wrong action, so how would it be for actions which atone for major wrong actions [that they would remain of any value after they have attoned a major wrong action]?

We have also previously seen the words of the man of the right-acting first generations who said that the wrong action is erased and its equivalent, one of the good actions which is the reward for an action, is dropped. So if this is the case for minor wrong actions, how will it be in the case of major wrong actions? Some of the major wrong actions may invalidate some of the deeds which are opposite to them, just as demands for gratitude and insulting words invalidate *ṣadaqah*, and transacting with usury invalidates *jihād* as ʿĀ'ishah said. Ḥudhayfah said, "Slandering a chaste

woman destroys the deeds of one hundred years." It has also been narrated from him as a *marfūʿ* hadith which al-Bazzār narrated. Just as abandoning the afternoon prayer invalidates one's deeds so one should not be ignorant that the reward of actions which act as atonement for major wrong actions is voided.

Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad* and also al-Ḥākim from a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The slave's good and bad actions will be brought on the Day of Rising and some of it will be trimmed off or paid by means of others. Then if any good action remains, space will be made for him because of it in the Garden."[138]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated a hadith that Ibn Lahīʿah said, "ʿAṭā' ibn Dīnār told me from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr concerning the words of Allah ﷻ:

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْراً يَرَهُ

'Whoever does an atom's (*dharrah*) weight of good will see it,'[139] that he said, 'The Muslims used to think that they would not be repaid for little things which they gave. If a poor person came they would not think it very much to give him a date, a broken-off piece of

bread or a walnut and the like, so they would reject it and say, “This isn’t anything. We will only be rewarded for those things we give which we love.” Others used to think that they would not be blamed for minor wrong actions such as small lies, glances, talking behind people’s backs, etc., saying, “Allah only promises the Fire for major wrong actions.” So Allah stimulated their desire to do even small good acts, because it is likely that they will accumulate, and He warned them about small wrong actions because it is likely that they will accumulate, and so He revealed, “Whoever does an atom’s (*dharrah*) weight…” meaning [by the *dharrah* not an atom but] the weight of the smallest ant “…of good will see it” meaning that [he will see it] in his record [of his actions], and that will make him happy.’ He said, ‘For every pious and impious person his wrong action will be recorded as a single wrong action, but his good actions will be recorded as ten good deeds. Then when it is the Day of Rising, Allah will also multiply the good deeds of the *mu’min* giving ten for every one, and He will erase ten wrong actions with every one good action, so that whoever’s good actions are more numerous than his

wrong actions by as much as the weight of a tiny ant will enter the Garden.'"[140]

The apparent meaning of this is that there will be a settlement of accounts between the good deeds and the bad deeds, and then the good deeds corresponding to the bad deeds will be dropped, and what excess of them remains after the accounting will be looked into. This is in accordance with the words of whoever says that the one whose good deeds outweigh his evil deeds by as much as a single good deed will be rewarded for this single good deed especially and the rest of his good deeds will be dropped in exchange for the wrong actions. It contradicts the position of those who say that he will be rewarded for all of it and that his wrong actions will be dropped as if they had never existed. This is in respect of the major wrong actions. As for minor wrong actions, they are erased by the right actions along with the fact that their reward remains, as he said ﷺ, "Shall I not show you that by which Allah erases wrong actions and by which He raises up the ranks? Completing *wuḍū*' in difficulties, many steps taken to the mosques, and waiting for the prayer after the prayer."[141] So he affirmed that these

actions atone for wrong actions and raise one up in degrees. Similarly, his words ﷺ “Whoever says:

لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ

‘There is no god but Allah alone without any partner to Him,’ one hundred times will have one hundred good deeds recorded for him and one hundred of his wrong actions erased from him, and it will be for him the equivalent of having freed ten slaves.”[142] This indicates that remembrance of Allah erases wrong actions, and that its reward remains for the one who does it in multiples.

Similarly the wrong actions of the one who turns in completely sincere *tawbah* are erased from him and his good actions remain for him, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَن سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعْدَ الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ

“Then when he achieves his full strength and reaches forty, he says, ‘My Lord, keep me thankful for the blessing You bestowed on me and on my parents, and keep me acting rightly, pleasing You. And make my descendants *ṣāliḥūn*. I have made *tawbah* to You and I am truly one of the Muslims.’ Those are people whose best deeds will be accepted and whose wrong deeds will be overlooked. They are among the Companions of the Garden, in fulfilment of the true promise made to them,”[143] and He says, exalted is He:

وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ لِيُكَفِّرَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“He who brings the truth and he who confirms it – those are the people who have *taqwā*. They will have anything they wish for with their Lord. That is the recompense of the good-doers. So that Allah may erase from them the worst of what they did and pay them their wages for the best of what they did.”[144] When He describes these people as having *taqwā* and *iḥsān* He indicated that they do not persist in wrong actions, but that rather they turn in *tawbah* from them. His words,

“SothatAllahmayerasefromthemtheworstofwhattheydid ,”comprises major wrong actions because they are the worst actions. He says:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا

“Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will erase his bad actions from him and greatly increase his reward,”[145] and so He based on *taqwā*, which comprises the performance of the obligatory matters and the giving up of things which are forbidden, the erasure of wrong actions and the multiplication of reward. Allah informs us concerning the *mu’minūn* who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth that they say:

رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ

“Our Lord, we heard a caller calling us to *īmān*: ‘Have *īmān* in your Lord!’ and we had *īmān*. Our Lord, forgive us our wrong actions, erase our bad actions from us and take us back to You with those who are truly good,”[146] and He informs us that He answered

that prayer of theirs, and He erased their bad actions from them and entered them in the Garden.

So in His words, “Forgive us our wrong actions, erase our bad actions from us,” He singles out ‘*dhunūb* – wrong actions’ for forgiveness and ‘sayyi’āt – bad actions’ for erasure, for it is said that ‘sayyi’āt – bad actions’ particularly mean minor wrong actions, and that by ‘*dhunūb* – wrong actions’ are meant major wrong actions, and that bad actions are erased, because Allah has made acts of atonement for them in the world both in the *Sharīʿah* and through the decree of destiny, whereas wrong actions require forgiveness which will protect their perpetrator from their evil effects. Forgiveness and erasure are both close in meaning, because it is said about forgiveness that it means the veiling of the wrong actions, and it has also been said that it means protection from the evil effects of the wrong actions as well as their veiling. It is for this reason that the cover of the head and that which protects it in war is called in Arabic *mighfar*[147], and not everything that covers the head is called *mighfar* [because they are not protective]. Allah informs us that the angels supplicate for the *mu’minūn* who turn in *tawbah* for forgiveness and protection from bad

actions. Erasure (*takfīr*) is of the same type, because the root of *kufr* is also veiling and covering over.

Some of the later generations made the distinction between the two of them that *takfīr* is the erasure of the traces of the wrong actions to the extent that it is as though it had never existed, and *maghfirah* – forgiveness – comprises along with that Allah's being bounteous to the slave and honouring him, but there are some views on that.

Some have explained it that forgiveness of wrong actions through right actions transforms them into good actions, and that their erasure through acts of atonement merely deletes them. But there are also some views on this, for it is authentic that the wrong actions which are punished by entrance into the Fire are transformed into good actions, then those which are erased by a right action that is an atonement for them are more appropriate [to be transformed into good actions].

It may be interpreted in two other senses:

First, that forgiveness is only obtained with absence of punishment and of taking to task, because it is protection from the entire evil of the wrong action, whereas erasure may take place after

punishment since worldly disasters and afflictions erase wrong actions, and they are punishments. Similarly, pardoning happens along with punishment and without it, and similarly mercy.

Second, the actions which atone are those which Allah has appointed to erase the wrong actions atoned for by them, and that is their reward and they have no other reward. Overwhelmingly they are of the type which involves opposition to the self and undergoing hardship for it, such as avoiding major wrong actions, which Allah has made an act of atonement for minor wrong actions.

As for those actions by which wrong actions are forgiven, they are apart from that, and both forgiveness and reward are united in them, such as remembrance of Allah for which good actions are recorded and by which bad actions are erased. On the basis of this, a distinction is made between actions which atone for wrong actions and others. As for atonement for wrong actions and their forgiveness when that is ascribed to Allah, then there is no distinction between them, but according to the former then there is a distinction between them also.

Two matters support this second aspect: the saying of Ibn ʿUmar when he freed the slave whom he had struck, “There is no reward for me in it ...,” inferring that it was an act of atonement. Second, that all worldly afflictions and trials atone for wrong actions. Many of the Companions and others of the right-acting first generations said that there is no reward in them along with erasure, even though some of them disagreed about that. It cannot be said [as an objection] that he explained acts of atonement in the hadith about sleep as meaning completing *wuḍū’* in difficult circumstances and walking to the prayer, and he said, “Whoever does that will live well and die well, and his situation with respect to his wrong actions will be as on the day his mother gave birth to him.”

All of these, despite their atonement for bad actions, they raise up the degree [of the one who does them] and there is a reward produced for them. Because we will say [in response to the objection] that there may be two things combined in one single act, by one of which the degree is raised and by the other of which wrong actions are expunged, thus, *wuḍū’* in itself is rewarded but completing it in severe cold is

one of the types of pain which people experience in the world so that in this case it is an act of atonement. As for in other cases then, through it wrong actions are forgiven as they are forgiven because of remembrance of Allah and other actions. Similarly, walking to prayers performed in a group is an act of drawing nearer to Allah and of obedience for which there is a reward, but the difficulty, tiredness and fatigue that people experience in it is an act of atonement. In the same way, restraining oneself within the mosque waiting for the prayer and cutting oneself off from one's customs and habits such as going to those places to which people like to go either to gain something worldly or for a stroll, then in this respect it is an act of disciplining the self and so is an act of atonement.

It has been narrated in the hadith that, "One of the two steps taken to the mosque raises up one's degree and the other removes a wrong action,"[148] which strengthens what we mentioned that that which produces atonement for wrong actions is not the same as that which produces higher degrees, and Allah knows best.

According to this, one action unites both atonement for bad actions and raising one's rank from two [different] angles, and so it is described in every case with both attributes, so that there is no contradiction in it being named both an act of atonement and the information that it multiplies rewards, or that it is described as raising one's rank. For this reason, he said ﷺ, "The five prayers, the Jumuʿah up to the next Jumuʿah and one Ramaḍān up to the next Ramaḍān atone for whatever happens between them as long as major wrong actions are avoided," because in the act of restraining the self and holding it to the obligatory actions there is an element of opposing its passions and restraining it from that to which it inclines naturally and that requires that they atone for minor wrong actions.

Similarly, being killed as a martyr (*shahīd*) in the way of Allah, because of the pain involved in it, atones for wrong actions and it raises up one's rank because of the right actions, both with heart and body, that are attached to it. So it is clear from this that some actions unite in themselves that which requires the elevation of one's rank and the atonement of bad actions from two [different] angles, and that there is no

contradiction between them, and this is firmly established about minor wrong actions without doubt. As for major wrong actions, they may be atoned for by the act of dying as a martyr (*shahīd*) as well the attainment of reward for the person who is martyr (*shahīd*). But the martyr (*shahīd*) who has wrong actions is in the fourth rank of those who are martyr (*shahīd*). It is narrated like that from the Prophet ﷺ from the hadith of Faḍālah ibn ʿUbayd which Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated.[149]

As for the forgiveness of wrong actions because of some deeds, along with fulfilment in their wage and reward, sound hadith narrated on the subject of remembrance of Allah show that. It has been said that these bad actions will also be written as good actions as is narrated in the hadith of Abū Mālik al-Ashʿarī which we mentioned previously. We have also mentioned from one of the right-acting first generations that opposite to the single bad action one of the single multiples of the reward for the good action is erased and that there remain nine good actions. The apparent outward meaning is that this particularly refers to minor wrong actions. As for in the next life, then good actions will be weighed

against bad actions and that some of the good actions will be cancelled because of the wrong actions, and then whoever's good actions outweigh his bad actions will be saved and enter the Garden whether he has minor or major wrong actions. It is just like this in the case of the one who has good actions but who has wronged people; those who have been wronged will take their due from his good actions and if there remains a single good action then he will enter the Garden because of it. Ibn Masʿūd said ﷺ, "If he was a friend of Allah and there remains in excess for him as much as the weight of a small ant [of *īmān* and good deeds], then Allah will multiply it until he enters the Garden. If he is one of the unfortunate, the angel will say, 'His good actions have expired and there remain many outstanding demands against him.' He will say, 'Take some of their bad actions and add them to his bad actions, and then beat and slap him to the Fire." Ibn Abī Ḥātim and others narrated it.

What is meant is that there remaining an excess of good actions to the amount of the weight of a tiny ant is only from the bounty of Allah ﷻ because of His multiplication of the *mu'min's* good actions and His placing blessing in them. It is similar with the case of

someone who has both good and bad actions and Allah wishes His mercy for him, then He grants him sufficient excess of good actions with which to enter the Garden, all of which is from the bounty of Allah and His mercy, because no one enters the Garden except by the bounty of Allah and his mercy.

Abū Nuʿaym narrated with a weak chain of transmission from ʿAlī as a *marfūʿ* hadith that, "Allah revealed to one of the prophets of the Children of Isrā'īl, 'Say to the people of your community who obey Me that they should not depend on their actions, because if in the reckoning on the Day of Rising I take retaliation from a slave whom I wish to punish then I will punish him. Say to the people of your community who disobey Me that they should not be cast down by their own hands, because I forgive tremendous wrong actions and I do not care.'"[150] A confirmation of this is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ in the authentic hadith, "He who is reckoned in detail will be punished," or in another version, "he will perish,"[151] and Allah knows best.

The second issue[152] is whether or not minor wrong actions require that one turn from them in *tawbah* as in the case of major wrong actions, since they are

atoned for merely by avoiding major wrong actions, because of His words, exalted is He:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

"If you avoid the serious wrong actions you have been forbidden, We will erase your bad actions from you and admit you by a Gate of Honour."[153] This is one of those things upon which people differ. Some say that there must be turning from them in *tawbah*, which is the position of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] and other *fuqahā'* and people of *Kalām* and others. Allah commands turning in *tawbah* right after mentioning minor and major wrong actions, when He says, exalted is He:

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ ... وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"Say to the *mu'minūn* that they should lower their eyes and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Allah is aware of what they do. Say to the *mu'min* women that they should lower their eyes and guard their private parts," up to His words, "Turn to

Allah every one of you, *mu'minūn*, so that hopefully you will have success."[154]

He commands turning in *tawbah* from minor wrong actions in particular in His words, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَى أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاء مِّن نِّسَاء عَسَى أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الِاسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! people should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to *īmān*! Those people who do not turn in *tawbah* from it are wrongdoers."[155]

Some people do not regard turning from them in *tawbah* as obligatory and that has been narrated of a group of the Muʿtazilah. Of the more recent people there are those who say, "One of either two matters is necessary: either to turn from them in *tawbah*, or to produce some good actions which will act as atonement for wrong actions."

Ibn ʿAṭiyyah narrated two positions in his Qur'ānic commentary concerning atonement for minor wrong actions by complying with the obligations and avoiding major wrong actions: first, that which he narrated from a group of the *fuqahā'* and people of hadith, that it can be said categorically that they are atoned for just by the plain outward meaning of the *āyah* and the hadith. Second, there is that which he narrated from the people who study the principles of the din, that one may not make a categoric statement to that effect, but that rather it must be interpreted as meaning an overwhelming likelihood or as something that is very strongly hoped for, but that it is up to the will of Allah ﷻ since if one made a categoric statement that they are atoned for then minor wrong actions would come under the ruling of those things that are permitted for which there is no consequence, which would be a defect in the supports of the *Sharīʿah*.

I say that it is said that one may not declare categorically that they are atoned for since the hadith which are related concerning atonement through actions always occur in tandem with mention of acting excellently well as is narrated concerning *wuḍū'* and

prayer. Then one is never sure of the existence of sufficient excellence in the action to require that it functions as an atonement. On the basis of this difference of view which Ibn ʿAṭiyyah mentioned, disagreement occurs as to whether it is necessary to turn from minor wrong actions in *tawbah*.

Ibn Jarīr narrated from al-Ḥasan that some people came to ʿUmar and said, "We see things in the Book of Allah which are not complied with." He said to a man among them, "Have you read all of the Qur'ān?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Have you completely comprehended it in yourself?" He said, "O Allah! No." He said, "Have you completely comprehended it with your sight? Have you grasped it in your words? Have you grasped it in your footsteps?" And he went around every last one of them. Then he said, "May his mother be bereft of ʿUmar! Do you impose on him that he must establish the Book of Allah on everyone? Our Lord knows that we will have bad actions." He said, "He recited, 'If you avoid the serious wrong actions (*as-sayyi'āt*) you have been forbidden, We will erase your bad actions from you and admit you by a Gate of Honour.'[156]"

There is from Anas ibn Mālik with his [Ibn Jarīr's] chain of transmission that he said, "I have not seen the like of that which has reached us from our Lord, exalted is He, and then we do not leave all of our families and properties for His sake." Then he was silent. He then said, "By Allah! our Lord has certainly imposed something much easier on us as a task than that. For our sakes He passes over whatever is less than major wrong actions, so how is it with us and with them?" Then he recited, "If you avoid the serious wrong actions (*as-sayyi'āt*) you have been forbidden, We will erase your bad actions from you and admit you by a Gate of Honour." Al-Bazzār narrated it in his *Musnad* as a *marfūʿ* hadith but it is more sound to say that it is a *mawqūf* statement. Allah describes the people of *iḥsān* as avoiding major wrong actions. He says, exalted is He:

وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ

"And [He will] repay those who do good with the Very Best, the ones who avoid the major wrong actions and indecencies – except for minor lapses (*al-lamam*). Truly your Lord is vast in forgiveness."[157] [158]

Concerning the explanation of *al-lamam* – minor lapses – the right-acting first generations have two positions: first, that they are the introductory matters, such as caresses and kissing, which lead to indecencies. It is narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās that, "It is that which is less than the *ḥadd* crimes [both] in terms of the threat of punishment in the Fire in the next life and the *ḥadd* punishment in the world." Second, it is to commit one of the indecencies or major wrong actions [perhaps hesitantly or covertly] a single time and then to turn in *tawbah* from it. It is narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās, and also from Abū Hurayrah a narration which has been narrated from him as a *marfūʿ* hadith although there is doubt in that ascription of it, that he said, "It is a single act of adultery or fornication, and then to turn in *tawbah* and not repeat it, a single act of drinking an intoxicant, and then to turn in *tawbah* and not repeat it, and a single act of theft, and then to turn in *tawbah* and not repeat it."[159]

Those who interpret the *āyah* thus say that one must turn from it in *tawbah*, as opposed to those who interpret it [*lamam*] as the first steps towards indecencies or major wrong actions, for they do not lay down the condition that one must turn in *tawbah*.

The clear outward meaning is that both positions are sound, and that both of them are meant in the *āyah*. Thus, the person of *iḥsān* is the one who does not ordinarily do major wrong actions and if he does, he turns from them in *tawbah*, and he is the one who if he does a minor wrong action it is overwhelmed in his good actions which atone for it. But he must not persist in it, as He says, exalted is He:

وَلَمْ يُصِرُّواْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُواْ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

"And [they] do not knowingly persist in what they were doing."[160]

It is narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "There is no minor wrong action if it is persisted in, and there is no major wrong action if one asks forgiveness for it." This is also narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith in a number of ways which are weak.

Since minor wrong actions in which one persists become major wrong actions, then the people of *iḥsān* must avoid persistence in minor wrong actions so that they will be counted as those who avoid major wrong actions and indecencies. Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ وَالَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ
وَالْفَوَاحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ
شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنتَصِرُونَ وَجَزَاءُ
سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ

“What is with Allah is better and longer lasting for those who have *īmān* and trust in their Lord: those who avoid major wrong actions and indecencies and who, when they are angered, then forgive; those who respond to their Lord and establish *ṣalāh*, and manage their affairs by mutual consultation and give of what We have provided for them; those who, when they are wronged, defend themselves. The repayment of a bad action is one equivalent to it. But if someone pardons and puts things right, his reward is with Allah. Certainly He does not love wrongdoers.”[161]

This *āyah* contains the description of the *mu’minūn* undertaking that with which Allah has obliged them of *īmān* and reliance upon Him, establishment of the prayer, spending from that which Allah provides them and responding to Allah in all matters of obedience to Him and along with all of that, they avoid major wrong actions and indecencies and this is the truth of

taqwā; and [the verse contains] the description of them in the way that they transact with other people by forgiving them when they become angry, and [it contains] the recommendation to them that they should pardon and put things right between people. As for His words, "Those who, when they are wronged, defend themselves," this does not contradict pardoning, because defence can be by showing the capability to take revenge, and then pardon can take place after that, so it is more complete and more perfect. An-Nakhaʿī said concerning this *āyah*, "They used to disapprove of being perceived as humbled [due to being forgiving], therefore when they were able and in a position of strength and power they pardoned." Mujāhid said, "They used to disapprove of the *mu'min* humbling himself to such an extent that deviant people should become emboldened against him, so if he is wronged the *mu'min* should show his ability to retaliate and then later pardon after that." Similar things are reported of many of the right-acting first generations, among them Qatādah and others.

These *āyāt* contain everything which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in his counsel to Muʿādh, because they contain the principles of the qualities of *taqwā*, by way

of doing that which is obligatory, refraining from major things that are forbidden and treating people well and pardoning them. The inseparable consequence of this is that if they do some wrong action, which is not a major one or an indecency, it will be overwhelmed by the qualities of *taqwā* which entail that it is atoned for and erased.

As for the *āyāt* in Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, He describes the people of *taqwā* in them as treating people well and seeking forgiveness for indecent acts and for wronging themselves, and not persisting in that, and this is the most perfect and complete [state], that one should turn in *tawbah* and seek forgiveness immediately after every wrong action whether minor or major as is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ advised Muʿādh in that which we mentioned earlier.

We have only gone to some lengths in treating this matter because people's need of it is very great, and everyone needs to know this and then to act according to it, and Allah is the One Who grants success and assistance.

The apparent sense of his words ﷺ, "And follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it," is that bad actions are effaced by good actions, and

we have previously mentioned those traditions in which it is said that bad actions are erased from the pages of the angels by good actions done after them. ʿAṭiyyah al-ʿAwfī said, “It has reached me that whoever weeps over his wrong actions will have them erased from him and good actions are written for him.” ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said, “Whoever remembers a wrong action which he has done so that his heart becomes agitated and afraid from it and he seeks Allah’s forgiveness ﷻ no thing will restrain them until the All-Merciful erases them for him.” Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith said, “It has reached me that Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, ‘Weeping in the daytime erases wrong actions done openly. Weeping at night erases wrong actions done secretly.’” We have already mentioned the words of the Prophet ﷺ, “Shall I not show you that by which Allah erases wrong actions and by which He raises up in rank?” and the rest of the hadith.

A party say that wrong actions are not erased from the records of actions by turning in *tawbah* or by anything else, but rather the one who does them must be made to know what he has done and read them on the Day of Rising. They infer that from His words, exalted is He:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا

"The Book will be set in place and you will see the evildoers fearful of what is in it. They will say, 'Alas for us! What is this Book which does not pass over any action, small or great, without recording it?'"[162] There are views on drawing that inference from this *āyah*, because it is the state of the evildoers alone which is mentioned in it, who are the people of criminal actions and terrible wrong actions. The *mu'minūn* who turn in *tawbah* from their wrong actions or whose wrong actions are forgiven because of their good actions are not included among them. More obvious than this is the inference which can be drawn from His words, "Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. Whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." (Sūrat az-Zilzālah:7-8). One of the commentators mentioned that this statement is the right one according to those who verify the truth of things. This statement has been narrated of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Bilāl ibn Saʿd ad-Dimashqī. Al-Ḥasan said concerning a slave who does a wrong action and then turns in *tawbah* and seeks forgiveness of Allah, that he will be

forgiven but it will not be erased from his record before he has been acquainted with it and questioned about it. Then al-Ḥasan wept severely and said, “If we were not to weep except for shame because of that station, we ought to weep.” Bilāl ibn Saʿd said, “Allah forgives wrong actions, but He does not erase them from the record until He makes the person acquainted with them on the Day of Rising, even if he turns in *tawbah*.”

Abū Hurayrah said, “Allah will draw the slave close on the Day of Rising, and He will place His protection over him and will veil him from all of the creatures. Then He will give him his record behind that veil and will say, ‘Son of Ādam, read your record.’ He will read his record and will pass by his good deeds, and then his face will lighten and his heart become happy. Allah will say, ‘Do you recognise them, My slave?’ and he will say, ‘Yes.’ He will say, ‘I have accepted them from you.’ So he will prostrate. He will say, ‘Raise your head and return to your record,’ and then he will pass by a bad action and his face will darken at that and his heart become alarmed, and he will quake from fear, and so much shame before Allah will seize him as no one else will know. Allah will say, ‘Do you recognise,

My slave?' He will say, 'Yes, Lord.' He will say, 'I have forgiven you them,' and he will prostrate. No one will see anything else but his prostration so some of them will call others, 'This slave is fortunate, since he has never disobeyed Allah.' They will not realise what he came to know when he was alone with his Lord ﷻ of those things which he had done."[163]

Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī said that Salmān said, "A man will be given his record on the Day of Rising. He will read the upper part and find his bad actions. When he is almost about to have a bad expectation, then he will look at the lower part and there are his good deeds. Then later he will look back at the upper part and they will have been changed into good actions." It has been narrated from Abū ʿUthmān from Ibn Masʿūd, and also from Abū ʿUthmān as his own words, and that is the most sound.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated with his chain of transmission from one of the companions of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that he said, "The people of the Garden will enter the Garden in four groups: the people of *taqwā*, then those who are grateful, then those who are fearful, and then the companions of the right hand." Someone asked, "Why are they called the companions

of the right hand?" He said, "Because they did both good and bad actions and so they are given their records in their right hands and they read their bad actions letter by letter. They will say, 'Our Lord, these are our bad actions, so where are our good actions?' At that Allah will erase their bad actions and transform them into good actions. Then they will say:

هَاؤُمُ اقْرَؤُوا كِتَابِيهْ

'Here, come and read my Book!'[164] They are the great majority of the people of the Garden." The people who adopt this position interpret the hadith on the erasure of bad actions by means of the good actions as meaning that the punishments for them are erased but not the fact of their being recorded in the records, and Allah knows best.

His words ﷺ "And treat people with good character," represent one of the qualities of *taqwā* without which *taqwā* is not complete. He only mentioned it separately because of the need to make it absolutely clear, since many people think that *taqwā* is to fulfil Allah's rights but not His slaves' rights. So he stipulated his command to [Muʿādh ibn Jabal] to treat

people well because he was sending him to the Yemen to teach them knowledge and *fiqh*, and to act as a *qāḍī*. Whoever is in such a situation is in greater need of treating people with good character than others for whom people might have no need and with whom he might not mix. Many of those who are overwhelmed with concern for fulfilling their duty to Allah and devotion to His love, to fear of Him and obedience to Him, then neglect entirely the duties they owe the slaves of Allah or fall short in them. To combine fulfilment of the rights owed to Allah and the rights owed to His slaves is extremely demanding for which only the most perfect of the prophets and the entirely truthful ones (*ṣiddīqūn*) are strong enough.

Al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī said, "There are three things that are very rare or non-existent: a good face along with taking care (*ṣiyānah*) [of one's chastity and honour from adultery],[165] good character along with taking on the *dīn* (*diyānah*), and brotherhood along with the Trust (*amānah*)."

One of the right-acting first generations said, "Dāwūd ﷺ sat in solitude, and so Allah ﷻ said, 'Why do I see you solitary?' He said, 'I have abandoned people for Your sake, Lord of the Worlds.'

He said, ‘Dāwūd, shall I not show you that by which you will keep people’s regard and attain My good pleasure? Treat people according to their characters, and keep *īmān* between Me and you.’”

Allah enumerates treating people with good character as one of the qualities of *taqwā* in His Book, indeed He begins with that in His words:

(وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“…[and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth] prepared for the people who have *taqwā*: those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people – Allah loves the good-doers.”[166]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission from Saʿīd alMaqbūrī that he said, “It reached us that a man came to ʿĪsā ibn Maryam, peace and blessings be upon him, and said, ‘Teacher of good! How can I have as much *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ as I ought?’ He said, ‘With a matter that is very slight: love Allah will all of your heart, and act with your striving and your strength as much as you are able, and show

mercy to the members of your species as you show mercy to yourself.' He said, 'Who is a member of my species, teacher of good?' He said, 'All of the descendants of Ādam. That which you do not want to be brought to you, then do not bring it to anyone and you will have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ as is fitting for Him.'"

The Prophet ﷺ regarded good character as the most perfect quality of *īmān*, as it is in that which Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ؓ from the Prophet ﷺ "The most perfect of the *mu'minūn* are those who have the best character."[167] Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated it with the extra words that, "A man may be a *mu'min* but there is yet something in his character [which is not praiseworthy] and that is a defect in his *īmān*."

Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Usāmah ibn Sharīk wherein he said, "They said, 'Messenger of Allah! What is the best thing which the Muslim man has been given?' He said, 'Good character.'"[168]

The Prophet ﷺ informed us that the person who has good character attains by his good character the degree of someone who fasts [extra optional fasts] and

stands in prayer [with extra optional prayers particularly at night], so that the one who intends to have *taqwā* should not be diverted from good character by fasting and prayer, thinking that it will cut him off from their merits. Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* attains by his good character the degrees of those who fast and pray."[169]

The Prophet ﷺ told us that good character is the weightiest thing which can be placed in the scale and that the person who has it is the most beloved of people to Allah and the closest to the prophets in being seated in a place of honour. Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated the hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is nothing placed in the scales which will be weightier than good character, and the person who has good character will attain by it the degree of the person who fasts and prays [extra optional fasts and prayers]."[170]

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Shall I not tell you of the most beloved of you to Allah and the nearest of you in the seats of honour to me on the Day of Rising?" They said, "Yes, of course." He said,

“Those of you who have the best characters.”[171] We have previously seen the hadith of Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ, “The things which will most cause [people] to enter the Garden are *taqwā* and good character.”

Abū Dāwūd narrated the hadith of Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I guarantee a house in the highest part of the Garden to whoever makes his character good.”[172] At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated the same meaning from a hadith of Anas.

The explanation of good character has been narrated from the right-acting first generations. Al-Ḥasan said, “Good character is nobility, unstinting generosity and enduring [the annoyance occasioned by others].” Ash-Shaʿbī said, “Good character is unstinting generosity, giving gifts, and a cheerful expression.” Ash-Shaʿbī was like that. Ibn al-Mubārak said, “It is an open face, and unstinting giving, and withholding harm from others.” Salām ibn Abī Muṭīʿ was asked about good character and so he recited some poetry and said:

“You see him delighted when you come to him, as if you are giving him what you are asking him for.

If there were nothing in his hand other than his *rūḥ* he would give it away generously, so let the one who asks him fear Allah.

He is the ocean no matter what direction you approach him from his depths are goodness and his shore is liberal generosity."

Imam Aḥmad said, "Good character is that you do not become angry or irritable." He also said, "Good character is that you endure what you experience from people."

Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh said, "It is to be open faced, and not to become angry." Muḥammad ibn Naṣr said the like of that.

One of the people of knowledge said, "Good character is to swallow your rage for the sake of Allah, and to show cheerfulness and joyousness except towards the innovator and the evildoer, and to pardon those who slip unless it is to teach them or to establish the hadd punishment, and to hold back from harming every Muslim or person who lives under a treaty unless it is to rectify some wrong that has been done, or to take retaliation on behalf of someone who has been done an injustice without compounding it [by

retaliating with more severity than the original injustice].”

In the *Musnad Imam Aḥmad* there is the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Anas al-Juhanī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The best of all merits are that you should keep ties with those who sever ties with you, give to those who refuse to give to you, and that you pardon whoever reviles you.”[173]

Al-Ḥākim narrated from a hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir al-Juhanī that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, ‘ʿUqbah, shall I not tell you the best qualities of character of the people of the world and the next life? You should join ties with those who sever ties with you, give to those who refuse to give to you, and pardon those who wrong you.’”[174]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated from a hadith of ʿAlī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Shall I not show you the noblest quality of character of the people of the world and the next life? You should join ties with whoever severs ties with you, give to whoever refuses to give to you, and pardon whoever wrongs you.”[175]

1 Muʿādh ﷺ died before the Abū Dharr ﷺ and ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ in 18 AH in a famous plague in Syria.

2 Imam Muslim's opinion is that as long as a meeting between the two narrators is 'possible' then the transmission is acceptable. Imam al-Bukhārī says that it must be proven that they have actually met at least once. Ed.

3 Al-Bazzār (1972)

4 Al-Ḥākim (1:54)

5 Aḥmad (5:181)

6 Aḥmad (5:169)

7 *At-Tamhīd* (6:55)

8 At-Tirmidhī (2004), Ibn Mājah (4246), Aḥmad (2:291), Ibn Ḥibbān (476)

9 Sūrat an-Nisā': 131

10 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 96

11 Sūrat al-Ḥashr: 18

12 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 28

13 Sūrat al-Muddaththir: 56

14 At-Tirmidhī (3328)

15 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 131

16 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 281

17 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 48 and 123

18 Sūrat al-Baqarah:1-4

19 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 177

20 Sūrat az-Zilzālah: 7-8

21 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 102

22 Ibn Abī Shaybah (15:37)

23 This is a saying of ʿUmar ﷺ narrated by ad-Dārimī (1:132)

24 Part of a hadith narrated by Muslim (1731)

25 Meaning the day of sacrifice during his farewell hajj. Ed

26 Aḥmad (5:251), at-Tirmidhī (616) and Ibn Ḥibbān (4563)

27 Ibn Ḥibbān (361)

28 Aḥmad (3:82)

29 Abū Yaʿlā (1000)

30 Or possibly vice-versa according to the vowelling. Trans.

31 At-Tirmidhī (2683)

32 Sūrat al-Anbiyā': 90

33 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 128

34 Muslim (2721)

35 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 2

36 Aḥmad (5:178), Ibn Mājah (4220)

37 An-Nasā'ī (3: 54-55)

38 Sūrat an-Nisā': 1

39 *Wāʿiẓ* denotes someone who exorts and admonishes. Trans.

40 The last phrase 'and peace' is the translation of the words *wa's-Salam*, often written at the close of a letter. Ed.

41 Sūrat al-Mulk: 14

42 Sūrat an-Najm: 31

43 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (172)

44 Sūrah Hūd: 114

45 Al-Bukhārī (4687), Muslim (2763)

46 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 133-136

47 *Maghfirah* "forgiveness" contains the concept of Allah covering over the slave's wrong actions. Trans.

48 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 201

49 Al-Bukhārī (7507), Muslim (2758)

50 At-Tirmidhī (3559)

51 Al-Ḥākim (1:59)

52 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

53 Al-Bazzār (3249)

54 Ibn Mājah (4250)

55 Abū Yaʿlā (483)

56 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (179)

57 Al-Bukhārī (6243)

58 Aḥmad (2:165)

59 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:240-1)

60 Sūrat an-Nisā': 17

61 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 119

62 Sūrat al-Furqān: 70

63 Sūrah Ḥā Hā: 82

64 Sūrah Maryam: 60

65 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

66 As-Suyūṭī attributes this to ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in *ad-Durr al-manthūr*. Ed.

67 Sūrat an-Nisā': 110

68 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (1783)

69 Sūrat al-Hajj: 76

70 Sūrat an-Nisā': 47

71 Sūrat at-Taḥrīm: 8

72 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 67

73 Sūrat an-Nūr: 31

74 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 102

75 Al-Bukhārī (4141), Muslim (2770) and others.

76 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (1655)

77 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 18

78 Sūrat an-Nisā': 47

79 Sūrah Hūd: 114

80 Aḥmad (244), *at-Tirmidhī* (3113) and others

81 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

82 Abū Dāwūd (1521), Ibn Mājah (1395), at-Tirmidhī (406), Aḥmad (1:2, 10)

83 Al-Bukhārī (159), Muslim (226)

84 Aḥmad (6:443)

85 Al-Bukhārī, Muslim (2764)

86 Muslim (2765)

87 In the *Tafsīr* (12:82)

88 Al-Bukhārī (528), Muslim (667)

89 Muslim (245)

90 *Ribāṭ* means to bind something fast, but can also manning fortresses in the way of Allah in defence of the Muslims, as well as remaining steadfast in the front line of the battle or the struggle. Trans.

91 Muslim (251)

92 Al-Bukhārī (1901), Muslim (760)

93 *Rafath* means sexual intercourse, which is forbidden during the Ḥajj itself, and can also mean obscene sexual conversation which might lead to intercourse. Trans.

94 Al-Bukhārī, Muslim (1350)

95 Aḥmad (4:145)

96 Al-Bukhārī (6042), Muslim (2691)

97 Al-Bukhārī (3293), Muslim (2691)

98 Aḥmad (6:425) and Ibn Mājah (3797)

99 At-Tirmidhī (3533)

100 Aḥmad (3:152)

101 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 102

102 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (3:296)

103 *Gharīb*: unusual, having a single narrator at some stage of the chain of transmission. Trans.

104 Munkar: rejected because it conflicts with *āyāt* of the Qur'ān or other hadith which are better established. Trans.

105 In *Kitāb aṣ-ṣalāh*

106 Muslim (233)

107 Muslim (228)

108 Aḥmad (5:439)

109 An-Nasā'ī (5:8), al-Ḥākim (1:200) and Ibn Ḥibbān (1748)

110 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:313)

111 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (148)

112 Sūrat an-Nisā': 31

113 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 11

114 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 29

115 Sūrat at-Taghābun: 9

116 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 5

117 Al-Bukhārī (18), Muslim (1709)

118 Al-Bukhārī (5641), Muslim (2573) and others

119 At-Tirmidhī (2626), Aḥmad (1:99) and others

120 Al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1:36)

121 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 33-34

122 In this hadith the Prophet ﷺ said about the person who had intercourse with his wife during her menstrual period, "He should donate a dinar or half a dinar." The hadith is narrated by Abū Dāwūd (264), an-Nasā'ī (1:153), at-Tirmidhī (136), and others. Ed.

123 Aḥmad (3:490) and Abū Dāwūd (3964)

124 Muslim (1657)

125 Al-Bukhārī (502), Muslim (144)

126 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 1

127 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 229

128 Sūrat an-Nisā': 13-14

129 Actually a hadith of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān. Trans.

130 It can thus be concluded that at the time of requesting the *ḥadd* punishment to be applied to him this man was not a major wrongdoer because he had already repented and the Prophet ﷺ had not asked him to pray as a form of atonement for a major wrong action. Ed.

131 Aḥmad (2:13-14), *at-Tirmidhī* (1905) and others

132 In *al-Mustadrak* (4:155)

133 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:263)

134 Sūrah Maryam: 60

135 Sūrah Ḥā Hā: 82

136 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 67

137 Al-Bukhārī (5949)

138 Al-Bazzār (3456), al-Ḥākim (4:252)

139 Sūrat az-Zilzālah: 7

140 Ibn Abī Ḥātim as mentioned in the *tafsīr* of Ibn Kathīr (8:484, 485)

141 Mālik (1:176) and Muslim (251)

142 Mālik (1:209), al-Bukhārī (3293), Muslim (2691) and others

143 Sūrat al-Aḥqāf: 15-16

144 Sūrat az-Zumar: 33-35

145 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 5

146 Sūrat Ali ʿImrān: 193

147 *Mighfar:* something worn beneath a helmet, or a section of chain mail worn beneath a cap as a protection.

148 Part of a hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī (477) and Muslim (649).

149 Aḥmad (1:23), *at-Tirmidhī* (1644)

150 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (4:195)

151 Al-Bukhārī (103), Muslim (2876) and others

152 This is the second of two issues in which people have differed. The first was whether good actions erased major and minor wrong actions or just the minor; that has been discussed extensively up to this point. Now the author introduces the second issue that people have differed on. Ed.

153 Sūrat an-Nisā': 31

154 Sūrat an-Nūr: 30-31

155 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 11

156 Sūrat an-Nisā': 31

157 Sūrat an-Najm: 32

158 Here I have adapted the Bewley translation because the placing of the stop differently does not allow the reader to hear the meaning the author intended and which he heard in the recitation he knew. Trans.

159 Aṭ-Ṭabarī

160 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

161 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 36-40

162 Sūrat al-Kahf: 49

163 Similar words are narrated by al-Bukhārī (4685) and Muslim (2768) in brief.

164 Sūrat al-Ḥāqqah: 19

165 Meaning that good looks without *taqwā* often lead to some form of wrong action, such as taking pleasure from others' attention or gaze, falling prey to that attention, becoming swayed by the way others respond because of one's beauty, and in the worst cases adultery and fornication. Ed

166 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 133-4

167 Aḥmad (2:72), Abū Dāwūd (4682), *at-Tirmidhī* (1162) and others

168 Ibn Mājah (3436), Aḥmad (4:278)

169 Abū Dāwūd (4798), Aḥmad (6:94) and Ibn Ḥibbān (480)

170 Abū Dāwūd (4799), *at-Tirmidhī* (2002), and Ahmad (6:442)

171 Ibn Ḥibbān (485)

172 Abū Dāwūd (4800)

173 Aḥmad (3:438)

174 Al-Ḥākim (4:161-2)

175 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

الحديث التاسع عشر

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُما قَالَ: كُنْتُ خَلْفَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ يَوْمًا، فَقَالَ: ﴿يَا غُلَامُ! إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ: احْفَظِ اللهَ؛ يَحْفَظْكَ، احْفَظِ اللهَ؛ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ؛ فَاسْأَلِ اللهَ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ؛ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الأُمَّةَ لَوِ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللهُ لَكَ، وَإِنِ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ؛ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْكَ، رُفِعَتِ الأَقْلَامُ، وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ﴾. رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِي، وَ قَالَ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ.

وَفِي رِوَايَةِ غَيْرِ التِّرْمِذِيِّ: ﴿احْفَظِ اللهَ؛ تَجِدْهُ أَمَامَكَ، تَعَرَّفْ إِلَى اللهِ فِي الرَّخَاءِ؛ يَعْرِفْكَ فِي الشِّدَّةِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ، وَأَنَّ الْفَرَجَ مَعَ الْكَرْبِ، وَأَنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا﴾.

Mindfulness of Allah

Abū'l-ʿAbbās ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "I was behind the Prophet ﷺ [on a camel] one day, and he said to me, 'Boy, I will teach you some words: Be mindful of Allah and He will be mindful of you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him facing you. When you ask, then ask Allah. When you seek help, then seek help from Allah. Know

that if the Ummah gathered together to benefit you with something, they would only benefit you with something that Allah had already written for you. If they gathered together to harm you with something, they would only harm you with something that Allah had already written against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried." At-Tirmidhī related it (2516) and said, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith."

In a narration apart from that of *at-Tirmidhī* there is, "Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. Acquaint yourself with Allah in comfortable circumstances, He will acknowledge you [when you are] in severe difficulty. Know that what has missed you was never going to befall you and what has befallen you was never going to miss you. Know that help is with patience, deliverance is with distress, and that with difficulty there is ease."[1]

At-Tirmidhī narrated this hadith in the version of Ḥanash also from Ibn ʿAbbās. Imam Aḥmad narrated it in the version of Ḥanash aṣ-Ṣanʿānī with two other interrupted chains of transmission and he did not distinguish the wording of one from the other, and the wording of his hadith is, "'Boy,' or 'Little boy, shall I not teach you words by which Allah will benefit you?'

I said, ‘Yes, of course,’ and so he said, ‘Be mindful of Allah, and He will be mindful of you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. Acquaint yourself with Allah in comfortable circumstances, He will acknowledge you [when you are] in severe difficulty. When you ask, then ask Allah. When you seek help, then seek help from Allah. The pens have dried with what is to be. Even if people altogether wanted to benefit you with something which Allah had not decreed for you, they would not be able to do it. If they wanted to harm you with something which Allah had not written against you they would not be able to do it. Know that there is much good in patiently enduring that which you dislike, and that help is with patience, deliverance is with distress, and that with difficulty there is ease.’”

This wording is more complete than the wording which the Shaykh [an-Nawawī] mentioned ﷺ and which he ascribed to someone “other than” at-Tirmidhī. The wording which the shaykh mentioned is narrated by ʿAbd ibn Ḥumayd in his *Musnad* with a weak chain of transmission from ʿAṭā’ from Ibn ʿAbbās, and similarly Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ ascribed it, in *al-Aḥādīth al-*

kulliyyah [the book] which was the basis of the Shaykh's "Forty" ﷺ to ʿAbd ibn Ḥumayd and others.

This hadith has been narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās in many different versions by his son ʿAlī, his *mawlā*[2] ʿIkrimah, ʿAṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ, ʿAmr ibn Dīnār, ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAbdullāh, ʿUmar the *mawlā* of Ghufrah, Ibn Abī Mulaykah and others.

The soundest of all of the paths of transmission is the path of Ḥanash aṣṢanʿānī which *at-Tirmidhī* narrated, which is what Ibn Mandah and others said. It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he advised Ibn ʿAbbās with this counsel in a hadith of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, Sahl ibn Saʿd, and ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar, but in all of their chains of transmission there is some weakness.

Al-ʿUqaylī mentioned that all of the chains of transmission of the hadith are delicate but that some are better than others. However, in any case, the route of Ḥanash by which *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it is very good.

This hadith comprises wonderful pieces of advice and very universal principles which are of the most important matters of the *dīn*, so much so that one of the people of knowledge said, "I reflected on this

hadith and it amazed me and I almost missed the mark. So what a pity, that there is such ignorance of this hadith and poor understanding of its meaning!"

I have already devoted a very large section [in another book][3] to its explanation and here we will mention its purposes and goals by way of abridgement, if Allah wills, exalted is He.

His saying ﷻ, "Be mindful of Allah," means "be mindful of His limits, His rights, and His commands and prohibitions." The mindfulness of that is by means of being occupied with His commands by complying with them and with His prohibitions by avoiding them, and with His limits by not transgressing beyond that which He commands and permits to that which He forbids. Whoever does that is one of those who are mindful of the limits of Allah whom Allah praises in His Book, saying ﷻ:

هَٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ

"This is what you were promised. It is for every careful (*ḥafīẓ*)[4] penitent: those who fear the All-Merciful in the Unseen and come with a contrite heart."[5] *Ḥafīẓ* (careful) is here explained as the one

who is mindful of the commands of Allah, and who is mindful of his wrong actions so that he can turn in *tawbah* from them.

One of the weightiest things of the commands of Allah of which it is necessary to be mindful is the prayers. Allah orders us to safeguard them saying:

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى

"Safeguard the *ṣalāh* – especially the middle one."[6] And He praises those who safeguard them saying:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ

"...those who safeguard their *ṣalāh*."[7] The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever safeguards them has a contract with Allah that He should enter him into the Garden,"[8] and in another hadith, "Whoever safeguards them, they will be for him a light and a proof and salvation on the Day of Rising."[9]

Similarly, purification[10] because it is the key of the prayer, and the Prophet ﷺ said, "No one safeguards *wuḍū'* except for a *mu'min*."[11]

Something else which we are commanded to safeguard are oaths. Allah ﷻ says:

وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ

"Keep (*iḥfaẓū*) your oaths,"[12] because people fall into making oaths a great deal, and many neglect those of them which are obligatory and do not keep them nor hold on to them.

A part of that is also safeguarding the head and the abdomen as is in the *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, "Modesty before Allah with true modesty is that you should safeguard the head and what it contains and safeguard the abdomen and what it encompasses," which is narrated by Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī.[13] Safeguarding the head and what it contains comprises safeguarding the hearing, sight and tongue from those things which are forbidden. Safeguarding the abdomen[14] and what it encompasses comprises safeguarding the heart from persisting in that which Allah forbids. Allah says ﷻ:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ

“Know that Allah knows what is in your selves, so beware of Him!”[15] Allah has gathered all of that together in His words:

إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْؤُولًا

“Hearing, sight and hearts will all be questioned.”[16] It also comprises safeguarding the abdomen from the entrance of *ḥarām* food and drink into it.

Some of the most important things to safeguard from the prohibitions of Allah ﷻ are the tongue and the genitals. There is in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever safeguards what is between his jaws and what is between his legs will enter the Garden.”[17] Al-Ḥākim narrated it. Imam Aḥmad narrated from a hadith of Abū Mūsā ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever safeguards what is between the back portions of his lower jaws (i.e. the tongue) and his genitals will enter the Garden.”[18]

Allah ﷻ orders us to safeguard our genitals and praises those who safeguard them, saying:

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ

“Say to the *mu’minūn* that they should lower their eyes and guard their private parts.”[19] He says:

وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيراً وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْراً عَظِيماً

“...men and women who guard their private parts, men and women who remember Allah much: Allah has prepared forgiveness for them and an immense reward.”[20] He says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

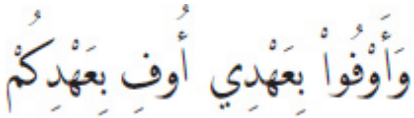
“It is the *mu’minūn* who are successful: those who are humble in their ṣalāh;” up to His words:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ

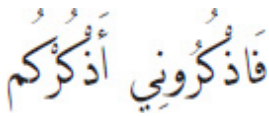
“those who guard their private parts – except from their wives or those they own as slaves, in which case they are not blameworthy.”[21]

Abū Idris al-Khawlānī said, “The first thing which Allah advised Ādam when he descended to the earth was that he guard his genitals and He said, ‘Do not place it except in that which is permitted.’”

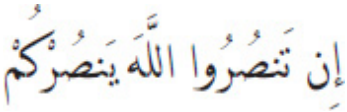
His words ﷻ “He will be mindful of you,” means that whoever safeguards the limits of Allah and shepherds His rights, then Allah will safeguard him, because the reward is of the same species as the action, as Allah, exalted is He, says:



“Honour My contract and I will honour your contract.”[22] He says:



“Remember Me – I will remember you.”[23] He says:



“If you help Allah, He will help you.”[24]

There are two types of ways in which Allah keeps His slave in mind: first, He is mindful of him with

respect to his worldly affairs, such as His protecting him in his body, children, family and wealth. Allah says ﷻ:

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ

"Everyone has a succession of angels in front of him and behind him, guarding him by Allah's command."[25] Ibn ʿAbbās said, "They are the angels who protect him by the command of Allah, but then when the decree comes they abandon him."[26]

ʿAlī ﷺ said, "With every man there are two angels who protect him from that which has not been decreed, but then when the decree comes they leave him alone with it, and the predestined term[27] is an impenetrable shield."[28]

Mujāhid said, "Every slave has an angel who protects him in his sleep and his waking from jinn, human beings and pests. If anything approaches him it says, 'Get back!' except for something which Allah has given permission, because it will occur to him."[29]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā'ī narrated from a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not give up supplicating with these supplications morning and evening:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي، اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي وَآمِنْ رَوْعَاتِي وَاحْفَظْنِي مِن بَيْنَ يَدِي وَمِنْ خَلْفِي وَعَنْ يَمِينِي وَعَنْ شِمَالِي وَمِن فَوْقِي وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِن تَحْتِي

'O Allah, I ask You for well-being in the world and in the next life. O Allah, I ask You for pardon and for well-being in my *dīn* and my world, my family and my wealth. O Allah, veil my vulnerability and make me secure from fright. Protect me in front of me and behind me, on my right and on my left, and from above me. I seek refuge with Your greatness from an event befalling me unexpectedly from underneath me.'"[30]

Whoever is mindful of Allah in his youth and in his strength, Allah will be mindful of and protect when he is old and weak, and He will give him the continued use of his hearing, sight, power, strength and his intellect.

One of the people of knowledge lived to be over one hundred years old and still delighted in his

strength and intellect. One day he made a great leap and was criticised for doing it. He said, “We safeguarded these limbs from acts of disobedience when we were young, and so Allah has preserved them for us in our old age.” The opposite of this is that one of the right-acting first generations saw an old man begging from people and he said, “This is a weak man who wasted Allah in his youth and so Allah wasted him in his old age.”

Allah may be mindful of the slave’s righteousness after his death in his descendants, as He says, exalted is He:

وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا

“Their father was one of the *ṣāliḥūn*.”[31] They were safeguarded because of the right-acting character of their father.[32] Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab said to his son, “I do extra prayers because of you, hoping that I will be safeguarded in you.” Then he recited, “Their father was one of the *ṣāliḥūn*.” ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, “Any *mu’min* who dies, Allah will be mindful of [him] in his children and in his children’s children.”

Ibn al-Munkadir said, “For the sake of a right-acting man, Allah will definitely be mindful of his children, his children’s children and the dwellings which are around him, so that they continue in protection from Allah and being veiled [from harm].”

When the slave is occupied and busy with obedience to Allah, then Allah will safeguard him in this state. There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There was a woman in a house who went out on one of the Muslims’ military expeditions leaving behind twelve she-goats and an implement with which she used to weave.” He said, “So [on her return] she could not find one of her she-goats and her weaving implement and said, ‘Lord, You have guaranteed that whoever goes out in Your way, You will look after [their goods and families] on their behalf, and I have lost my she-goat and my weaving implement, and I beg You for my she-goats and my weaving implement.’” He said, “The Prophet ﷺ mentioned the strength with which she beseeched her Lord, blessed is He and exalted.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “So the next morning, there was her she-goat and in addition the like of it, and her weaving implement and in addition the like of it.”[33] The

weaving implement is the spindle with which one spins and weaves.

Allah will safeguard from every harm whoever is mindful of Him. One of the right-acting first generations said, “Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah has certainly protected himself, and whoever wastes His *taqwā* has certainly wasted himself, and Allah has no need of him.”

One of the astonishing aspects of Allah’s protecting those who are mindful of Him is that He makes animals that are dangerous by nature protect him from harm, as happened to Safīnah, the *mawlā* of the Prophet ﷺ, whose boat broke and he drifted out to an island. He saw a lion who began to walk with him until he had shown him the way. When he had placed him securely on it he began to growl as if saying farewell, and then left him.[34]

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham was seen asleep in an orchard with a snake by him in whose mouth was a bouquet of narcissi, and it continued to protect him until he awoke.

The opposite of this is that someone who neglects Allah, Allah will neglect him and let him perish, so that he becomes lost among people, to such an extent

that he receives harm and trouble from those from whom he expects benefit such as his own family and others. One of the right-acting first generations said, “Sometimes I disobey Allah, and I recognise it in the behaviour of my servant and my riding beast.”

The second type of safeguarding, and it is the noblest of the two types, is Allah’s safeguarding the slave in his *dīn* and his *īmān*, so that He protects him during his life from those ambiguities which lead one astray and from forbidden appetites, and preserves his *dīn* for him at death, and so that He takes his *rūḥ* in the condition of *īmān*. One of the right-acting first generations said, “When death comes to a man, it is said to the angel, ‘Smell his head!’ He says, ‘I find the Qur’ān in his head.’ He says, ‘Smell his heart!’ He says, ‘I find fasting in his heart.’ He says, ‘Smell his feet!’ He says, ‘I find standing for prayer in his feet.’ He says, ‘He safeguarded himself and so Allah safeguarded him.’”

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from al-Barā’ ibn ʿĀzib from the Prophet ﷺ that he told him to say before he went to sleep:

إن قَبَضْتَ نَفْسِي فَارْحَمْهَا وَإِنْ أَرْسَلْتَهَا فَاحْفَظْهَا بِمَا تَحْفَظُ بِهِ عِبَادَكَ الصَّالِحِينَ

“If You take my soul then have mercy on it, and if You release it then protect it with that with which You protect Your right-acting slaves.”[35]

There is in the hadith of ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say:

اَللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي بِالْإِسْلَامِ قَائِماً وَاحْفَظْنِي بِالْإِسْلَامِ قَاعِداً وَاحْفَظْنِي بِالْإِسْلَامِ رَاقِداً وَلَا تُطِعْ فِيَّ عَدُوّاً وَلَا حَاسِداً

“O Allah, protect me with Islam standing, protect me with Islam sitting, and protect me with Islam reclining, and do not comply with [the supplication] an enemy or a malicious envier [makes] against me.” Ibn Hibban narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.[36]

The Prophet ﷺ used to take leave of someone who intended to travel saying:

أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَأَمَانَتَكَ وَخَوَاتِيمَ عَمَلِكَ

“I entrust Allah [the protection of] your *dīn*, your trust and the conclusions of your deeds,” and he would say, “When Allah is entrusted with something, He safeguards it.”[37] An-Nasā’ī and others narrated it.

In general, Allah ﷻ protects the *dīn* of the *mu’min* who takes care of His limits, and He intervenes

between him and that which would corrupt his *dīn* with all sorts of protection, some of which the slave may not be aware, and which he might even dislike, as He says about Yūsuf ﷺ:

كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

"That happened so We might avert from him all evil and lust. He was Our chosen slave."[38] Ibn ʿAbbās said about His words, exalted is He:

أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ

"... that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart,"[39] "He intervenes between the believer and the act of disobedience which would drag him to the Fire."[40]

Al-Ḥasan said, when the disobedient were mentioned, "They have become of little importance to Him and so they disobeyed Him, for if they had been dear to Him, He would have protected them [from doing wrong]."

Ibn Masʿūd said, “A slave [of Allah] becomes concerned about some matter of trade or leadership until it is made easy for him, so that Allah looks towards him and says to the angels, ‘Avert it from him, because if I were to make it easy for him, by that I would cause him to enter the Fire.’ So Allah averts it from him, and he goes on saying, ‘So-and-so beat me to it, and so-and-so outsmarted me,’ but it is only the bounty of Allah ﷻ.”

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated from a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ says, ‘There are some of My slaves whose *īmān* will never be right except through poverty, and if I were to be expansive towards them it would ruin them. There are some of My slaves whose *īmān* will never be right except through wealth, and if I were to impoverish them it would ruin them. There are some of My slaves whose *īmān* will never be right except in good health and if I were to make them ill it would ruin them. There are some of My slaves whose *īmān* would never be right except through illness and if I were to make them healthy it would ruin them. There are some of My slaves who seek to enter by a door of worship and I prevent them from that so that conceit doesn’t enter them. I manage the

affairs of My slaves by My knowledge of what is in their hearts. I am All-Knowing, All-Aware."[41]

His words ﷺ, "Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him facing you," and in another version, "in front of you," means that whoever is mindful of the limits of Allah and is careful of the rights due to Him will find Allah with him in every state which he faces, protecting him, helping him, guarding him, guiding him aright and directing him, because:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَواْ وَّالَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ

"Allah is with those who have *taqwā* of Him and with those who are gooddoers."[42] Qatādah said, "Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah, He is with him, and whomever Allah is with, then the Party Which is never overcome is with him, the Guard Who never sleeps, and the Guide Who never strays."[43]

One of the right-acting first generations wrote to a brother of his, "If Allah is with you, whom can you fear? If He is against you, in whom can you place hope?"

This special 'withness' is that which is mentioned in His words, exalted is He, to Mūsā and Hārūn:

لَا تَخَافَا إِنَّنِي مَعَكُمَا أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَى

“Have no fear. I will be with you, All-Hearing and All-Seeing,”[44] and Mūsā’s words:

كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ

“Never! My Lord is with me and He will guide me,”[45] and in the words of the Prophet ﷺ to Abū Bakr when they two were in the cave, “What do you think of two of whom Allah is the third?

لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا

‘Do not grieve; truly Allah is with us.’[46]”[47]

This special ‘withness’ requires help, aid, protection, and succour as opposed to the ordinary and general ‘withness’ mentioned in His words, exalted is He:

مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا

“Three men cannot confer together secretly without Him being the fourth of them, or five without Him being the sixth of them, or fewer than that or more without Him being with them wherever they are,”[48] and in His words:

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلاَ يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لاَ يَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ

“They try to conceal themselves from people, but they cannot conceal themselves from Allah. He is with them when they spend the night saying things which are not pleasing to Him,”[49] because this ‘withness’ is with respect to His knowledge, awareness and His watchfulness over their actions, and thus demands the slaves’ fear of Him. The former ‘withness’ necessarily involves the protection, guarding and help of the slave, for whoever is mindful of Allah and is careful of His rights, will find him facing him and in front of him in every state so that he will become intimate with Him and enriched by Him above need for His creatures, as is in the hadith, “The best *īmān* is that the slave knows that Allah is with him wherever he is,” which we have mentioned previously.

It has been narrate from Bunān al-Ḥammāl that he went alone into the countryside on the road to Tabuk and became lonely, so a hidden voice spoke to him, “Why are you lonely? Is your Beloved not with you?”[50] Somebody said to one of them, “Are you not lonely by yourself?” And so he said, “How can I be lonely when He says, ‘I sit with whoever remembers Me’?” Someone said to another person, “We see you alone,” and so he said, “The one with whom Allah is, how can he be alone?” Someone said to another person, “Do you not have an intimate companion with you?” He said, “Yes, of course.” They asked, “Where is he?” He said, “Facing me, with me, behind me, to my right, to my left and above me.” Ash-Shibli used to recite:

> When we set out at night and You are in front of us,
> Your remembrance is sufficient for our mounts as a guide.

His words ﷺ, “Acquaint yourself with Allah in comfortable circumstances, He will acknowledge you [when you are] in severe difficulty,” means that when the slave has *taqwā* of Allah, guards His limits, takes

care of His rights when he is in comfortable circumstances, then he has made himself known to Allah by that and there comes into existence between him and his Lord a special recognition (*maʿrifah*), so that his Lord will acknowledge him when he is in severe difficulty and will take care of him because of his having made himself known to Allah when he was in comfortable circumstances. He will rescue him from severe difficulties because of that *maʿrifah*. This special recognition necessarily requires the slave's nearness to his Lord and his love of Him, and His answering his supplication. The slave's *maʿrifah* of his Lord is of two kinds:

First, the general *maʿrifah*, which is that of affirmation, confirmation [of the truth], and *īmān* and this is universal in respect of all the *muʾminūn*.

Second, a special *maʿrifah* which involves the heart's totally inclining towards Allah, devotion to Him and intimacy with Him, tranquillity with His remembrance, modesty before Him, and awe of Him. This special *maʿrifah* is that around which the gnostics (*ʿarifun*) revolve, as one of them said, "Bereft are the people of the world. They leave it without tasting the

sweetest thing in it." Someone asked, "What is that?" He said, "Maʿrifah of Allah ﷻ."

Aḥmad ibn ʿĀṣim al-ʿAnṭākī said, "I would love not to die until I know my Master (Mawlā). *Maʿrifah* of Him is not [just] affirmation of Him, but the *maʿrifah* which, if you know Him, then you are modest before Him."

Allah's recognition (*maʿrifah*) of His slaves has two types:

First, a universal recognition, which is His knowledge, exalted is He, of His slaves, and of what they conceal and what they make public, as He says:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ

"We created man and We know what his own self whispers to him."[51] And He says:

هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ

"He has most knowledge of you when He first produced you from the earth, and when you were embryos in your mothers' wombs."[52]

Second, the special recognition which involves His loving His slave, drawing him nearer to Him, responding to his supplication, and rescuing him from severe difficulties, which is that recognition indicated by his words ﷺ in that which he narrates from his Lord, “My slave continues to draw nearer to Me by optional extra acts until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he seizes and his leg with which he walks. If he asks Me, I will definitely give him, and if he seeks refuge with Me, I will definitely give him refuge.” There is in another version, “If he supplicates Me, I will definitely answer him.”[53]

When al-Ḥasan fled from al-Ḥajjāj, he entered the house of Ḥabīb ibn Muḥammad. Ḥabīb said to him, “Abū Saʿīd, is there not between you and your Lord that with which you supplicate Him, so that He will conceal you from these [people]? Enter the house,” and so he entered. The security forces entered right after him but could not see him. That was mentioned to al-Ḥajjāj and he said, “No, rather he was in the house, but Allah made them blind so they did not see him.”

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ met Shaʿwānah the worshipper and asked her for a supplication, so she said, “Fuḍayl, there is between you and Him that which if you supplicate Him by it He will answer,” and Fuḍayl fainted.

Someone said to Maʿrūf, “What was it that stirred you to devotion and worship?” suggesting to him that it was death, the interspace (*barzakh*) [of the grave], the Garden and the Fire. Maʿrūf said, “There is a King in Whose hand all of this is. If there is *maʿrifah* between you and Him, He will suffice you for all these things.”

In summary, whoever treats Allah with *taqwā* and obedience in the condition when he is in comfortable circumstances, then Allah will treat him with kindness and help him when he is in severe difficulties. At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever would be pleased for Allah to respond to him in difficulties, then let him make many supplications when [he is] in comfortable circumstances.”[54]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim and others narrated from the version of Abū Yazīd ar-Raqāshī from Anas as a *marfūʿ* hadith that, “When Yūnus, peace and blessings be upon him,

supplicated in the belly of the whale, the angels said, ‘Lord, this is a well-known voice from strange lands.’ Allah ﷻ asked, ‘Do you not recognise him?’ They asked, ‘Who is it?’ He answered, ‘My slave, Yūnus.’ They asked, ‘Your slave Yūnus from whom accepted action and answered supplication were continually raised up?’ He answered, ‘Yes.’ They asked, ‘Lord, will You not show mercy for what he used to do in comfortable circumstances and so rescue him from the trial?’ He answered, ‘Yes, of course.’” He said, “So Allah commanded the whale and it cast him up on the wide and spacious tract of land.”[55]

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays said, “Remember Allah in comfortable circumstances, and He will remember you when you are in severe difficulties. Yūnus, peace and blessings be upon him, used to remember Allah, exalted is He, then when he fell into the belly of the whale, Allah, exalted is He, said:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

‘Had it not been that he was a man who glorified Allah, he would have remained inside its belly until the Day they are raised again.’[56] However, Firʿawn

was a tyrant who forgot the remembrance of Allah, then, when he was on the point of drowning, he said, 'I believe...' and Allah, exalted is He, said:

آلْآنَ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

'What, now! When previously you rebelled and were one of the corrupters?'[57]"

Salmān al-Fārisī said, "If a man makes much supplication when he is in comfortable circumstances and then some hardship occurs to him and he supplicates Allah, exalted is He, the angels say, 'A well-known voice,' and they intercede for him. However, if he did not normally make much supplication when in comfortable circumstances and then some hardship occurs to him and he supplicates Allah, exalted is He, the angels say, 'A voice which is not well-known,' and they do not intercede for him."

A man said to Abū'd-Dardā', "Counsel me." He said, "Remember Allah when you are in comfortable circumstances, Allah ﷻ will remember you in hardship." There is also from him that he said, "Supplicate Allah on the day when you are in comfortable circumstances hopefully that He will respond to you on the day when you are in severe difficulty."

The most terrible of the severe difficulties which can happen to the slave in the world is death, but what comes after that is more severe than it if the slave's destination is not good. Thus, the *mu'min* must be prepared for death and what comes after it when he is in health by having *taqwā* and doing right actions. Allah says ﷻ:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! have *taqwā* of Allah and let each self look to what it has sent forward for Tomorrow. Have *taqwā* of Allah. Allah is aware of what you do. Do not be like those who forgot Allah so He made them forget themselves. Such people are the deviators."[58]

Whoever remembers Allah when he is well and in comfortable circumstances, and at that time prepares himself to meet Allah ﷻ in death and that which comes after it, then Allah will remember him at the time of these severe matters, and will be with him during them, show kindness to him and help him, manage his affair and establish him firmly in his *tawḥīd*, and then he will meet Him while He is content and pleased with him. Whoever forgets Allah when he is healthy and in comfortable circumstances and does not prepare at that time to meet Him, Allah will forget him at the time of these distressing events, meaning that He will turn away from him and neglect him. When death comes to the *mu'min* who is prepared for it, he will have a good opinion of his Lord, and good news from Allah will come to him so that he will love to meet Allah and Allah will love to meet him. However, the profligate will be the direct opposite of that. At that time the *mu'min* will be joyous and rejoice because of that which he has forwarded which he comes upon, and the profligate will regret and say:

يَا حَسْرَتَى عَلَى مَا فَرَّطتُ فِي جَنبِ اللَّهِ

“Alas for me for neglecting what Allah was due.” (Sūrat az-Zumar:[56])

Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī said just before his death, “How could I not hope [for good] from my Lord when I have fasted eighty Ramadans for His sake?”[59]

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh at his death said to his son, “Do you think that Allah will allow your father’s forty years to go to waste in which he concluded the recitation of the Qur’ān every night?” Ādam ibn Abī Iyas concluded a recitation of the Qur’ān while he was on the point of death, and then he said, “By my love for You, won’t You be gentle with me at this moment of death? I had wished for You for this day, I had hoped for You. There is no god but Allah,” and then he died.

When the time of death came for Zakariyya ibn ʿAdī, he raised his two hands and said, “O Allah, I long for You.”

ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad az-Zāhid said on his death-bed, “My Master, for this hour I have saved You, and for this day I have acquired You for myself eternally. Make a reality of my good opinion of You.”

Qatādah spoke concerning the words of Allah ﷻ:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجاً

"Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out..."[60] and said, "...from every distress at the time of death."

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah related from Ibn ʿAbbās concerning this *āyah*, "He will save him from every distress in the world and the next life."[61]

Zayd ibn Aslam spoke about His words ﷻ:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا

"The angels descend on those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then go straight: 'Do not fear and do not grieve,'"[62] and [Zayd] said, "He will be given that good news at his death, in his grave and on the day he is raised up, because he will be in the Garden and the joy of the good news will not have left his heart."

Thābit al-Bannānī said about this *āyah*, "It has reached us that when Allah raises the *mu'min* from his grave, the two angels who had been with him in the world receive him and say to him, 'Do not fear and do not grieve.' So, Allah will give him security from fear and will still his eyes. Every terrible thing which

overwhelms people on the Day of Rising will be stillness and rest for the mumin's eyes since Allah guided him, and because of what he did in the world."[63]

His saying ﷺ, "When you ask, then ask Allah. When you seek help, then seek help from Allah," is derived from His words, exalted is He:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

"You alone we worship. You alone we ask for help,"[64] because asking Allah is supplicating and desiring from Him, and, "Supplication is *the* act of worship," as is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr, and then he recited His words, exalted is He:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

"Your Lord says, 'Call on Me and I will answer you.'[65]" Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah narrated it.[66]

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Anas ibn Mālik from the Prophet ﷺ, "Supplication is the marrow[67] of

worship."[68] So, these words comprise that Allah ﷻ is asked and no other than Him is asked, and that Allah is sought help from and no other.

As for asking, Allah commands us to ask Him when He says:

وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِ

"But ask Allah for His bounty."[69] There is in *at-Tirmidhī* from Ibn Masʿūd as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Ask Allah for His bounty, because Allah loves to be asked."[70] There is also from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever does not ask Allah, He becomes angry with him."[71] In another hadith, "Let any of you ask his Lord for all of his basic needs even to the extent of asking Him for a strap for his sandal when it breaks."[72]

There are many sound hadith concerning the prohibition of asking creatures. The Prophet ﷺ took the pledge of allegiance of a whole group of his Companions on the basis that they should not ask people for anything, among them being Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, Abū Dharr, and Thawbān. One of them would

drop his whip or the halter of his camel and would not ask anyone else to hand it to him.[73]

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated a hadith of Abū ʿUbaydah ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Messenger of Allah, such and such a tribe attacked me and made off with my son and my camels," and so the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "The family of Muḥammad are such and such, they are a family who do not have a *mudd* (a cupped double handful of food) nor a *ṣāʿ* (four *mudds*), so ask Allah ﷻ." He went back to his wife and she said, "What did he say to you," and so he told her. She said, "How excellent is his response to you!" It was not very long before Allah brought his son back to him and his camels in a more excellent condition than they had been [in condition or in numbers]. So he went to the Prophet ﷺ and told him about it, and he ascended the mimbar, praised Allah and told people to ask Allah ﷻ and to desire from Him, and he recited, "Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out and provide for him from where he does not expect."[74] [75]

It is established in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from the Prophet ﷺ that, "Allah ﷻ says, 'Is there any who is supplicating so that I can answer him? Is there anyone

who is asking so that I can give him? Is there any who is seeking forgiveness so that I can forgive him?'"[76]

Al-Maḥāmilī and others narrate the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah, exalted is He, says, 'Who asked Me and I did not answer him, who asked Me and I didn't give him, who asked forgiveness of Me and I did not forgive him? I am the Most Merciful of the merciful.'"

Know that asking Allah ﷻ and not asking His creatures is what is specifically expected, because in asking there is the expression of humility, bereftness, need and poverty on the part of the one asking. He also acknowledges the power of the one asked to remove his trouble, help him attain what he seeks, draw benefits towards himself and repel hardships from himself, and it is not correct to show humility and abject need towards any but Allah alone because it is the reality of worship. Imam Aḥmad used to supplicate saying, "O Allah, as You have preserved my face from prostration to other than You, then preserve it from asking other than You." No one is able to remove harm or bring benefit except Him. As He says:

وَإِن يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَآدَّ لِفَضْلِهِ

“If Allah afflicts you with harm, no one can remove it except Him. If He desires good for you, no one can avert His favour.”[77] He also says:

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِن بَعْدِهِ

“Any mercy Allah opens up to people, no one can withhold, and any He withholds, no one can afterwards release.”[78]

Allah, glorious is He, loves to be asked and that people should ardently desire their needs from Him, and to be importuned in asking and supplicating Him, and He is angry with those who do not ask. He demands of His slaves that they ask Him, and He is able to give all of His creatures what they ask for without that diminishing anything of His kingdom. Creatures are the opposite of that: they dislike to be asked and love not to be asked because of their own incapacity, need and poverty. It is for that reason that Wahb ibn Munabbih said to a man who used to visit royalty, “Woe to you! You go to those who close their doors against you, and show you their poverty, and try to hide their wealth from you, and you abandon One Who opens His door to you at the midpoint of the

night and the midpoint of the day, shows you His wealth and says, 'Ask Me and I will answer you.'"

Ṭāwus said to ʿAṭā', "Beware of seeking your needs from someone who locks his door to keep you out and puts a veil outside it. You must have recourse to the One Whose door is open until the Day of Rising, Who commands you to ask Him, and Who promises to answer you."

As for seeking help by means of Allah ﷻ and not from anyone else of His creatures, that is because the slave is incapable of independently drawing to himself those things which are useful to him, or repelling those which harm him, and none can help him with those things which are useful to him in his *dīn* and in his worldly affairs but Allah ﷻ.

Whomever Allah helps is truly helped. Whomever He forsakes is forsaken. This is the reality of the meaning of the saying, "There is no power and no strength but by Allah,"[79] because its meaning is that there is no means for the slave to transform from one state to another or one condition to another, and there is no strength to do that except through Allah. This is a tremendous saying which is one of the treasures of the Garden. The slave needs to seek help by Allah in

order to do what he is commanded to do and give up what he is forbidden to do, and in order to be patient on all the things that are decreed for him in the world, at death and after it, such as the terrors of the interspace and the Day of Rising. No one is able to help with respect to that except Allah ﷻ. Whoever is worthy of help in all of that, He will help. There is in the *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith from the Prophet ﷺ, "Exert yourself for what will benefit you, seek help from Allah and do not hold back."[80]

Whoever gives up seeking help from Allah and seeks help from someone other than Him, Allah will entrust him to the one from whom he sought help and he will be forsaken. Al-Ḥasan wrote to ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, "Do not seek help from anyone other than Allah so that Allah entrusts you to him." One of the right-acting first generations said, "My Lord, I am astonished at how someone who knows You can hope for someone other than You. I am astonished at how someone who knows You can seek help from anyone other than You."

His saying ﷺ, “The pen is dry with whatever is to be,” and in another narration, “The pens have been lifted and the pages are dry,” is an allusion to the preceding writing of all of the decrees and the fact that that was finished a long time ago, because when the writing of a book is finished and the pens are lifted from it, and a long time passes, then definitely the pens have been lifted from it, and the pens with whose ink it was written have become dry, and the page in which was written with the ink has become dry. This is one of the best and the most eloquent allusions.

The Book and many authentic sunnahs show meanings which are similar. Allah, exalted is He, says:

مَا أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

“Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen. That is something easy for Allah.”[81]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah wrote creatures’ destinies fifty-thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth.”[82] There is also in it from Jābir that, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, for what

purpose is action today?' Is it with respect to that with which the pens have already dried and the decrees for which have already occurred, or is it with respect to that which is yet to come?' He answered, 'No, rather it is with respect to that with which the pens have already dried and the decrees for which have already occurred.' He asked, 'Then for what purpose is action?' He replied, 'Act! for everyone is eased to that for which he is created[83].'"[84]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The first thing that Allah created was the pen. Then He said, 'Write!' And so it flowed in that moment with that which would be until the Day of Rising."[85] The hadith related with this same meaning are numerous and it would be too lengthy to mention them all.

His saying ﷺ, “Even if all of the people want to benefit you in some way which Allah has not decreed, they will not be able to do it, and if they want to harm you in some way which Allah has not written against you, they will not be able to do it,” is in the narration of Imam Aḥmad. The version of at-Tirmidhī is also in the same sense, and it means that everything which affects the slave in the world, both what harms him and what benefits him, has been decreed for him, and nothing affects the slave but that which has been written for him beforehand in the Preceding Decree, even if all people were to exert themselves to that end

The Qur’ān shows the same as this in His words ﷻ :

قُل لَّن يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا

“Say: ‘Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us”,[86] and in His words, “Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen,”[87] and in His words:

قُل لَّوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ

“Say, ‘Even if you had been inside your homes, those people for whom killing was decreed would have gone out to their place of death.’”[88]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of Abū’d-Dardā’ ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Everything has an essential reality, and the slave will not attain the essential reality of *īmān* until he knows that what happens to him could not have missed him, and that what passes him by could not have happened to him.”[89] Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah also both narrated that same sense from a hadith of Zayd ibn Thābit from the Prophet ﷺ.

Know that the pivot of all this counsel is this root matter and that what is mentioned before and after it are like branches and derivatives of it which return back to it, because when the slave knows that nothing happens except what Allah has decreed for him, whether good or bad, of benefit or of harm, and that all people’s exertions in opposition to that which is decreed decidedly will be of no use, then he will know at that time that Allah alone is the One to cause harm or benefit, Who gives and Who refuses. That requires that the slave knows his Lord to be One ﷻ, he obeys only Him and protects His limits, since by worshipping

the One Who is worshipped one only means to gain things of benefit and to repel harm. It is for this reason that Allah blames the ones who worship those who cannot benefit them or do them harm, and cannot enrich their worshippers in any way. Someone who knows that only Allah benefits and harms, gives and prevents, then that requires him to fear, hope for, love and ask from, humble himself to and supplicate only Him, and to give preference to His obedience over showing obedience to all people, and that he must protect himself from His wrath by his *taqwā* even if by that he were to enrage everyone else, and he must seek help from Him alone and ask Him alone, and be sincere to Him in his supplications in difficulties and in comfortable circumstances, as opposed to the idolaters who are sincere in supplication to Him in difficult circumstances but forget Him in comfortable circumstances and supplicate those apart from Him from whom they hope for benefit. Allah says ﷻ:

قُلْ أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَاشِفَاتُ ضُرِّهِ أَوْ أَرَادَنِي بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَاتُ رَحْمَتِهِ قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

“Say: ‘So what do you think? If Allah desires harm for me, can those you call upon besides Allah remove

His harm? Or if He desires mercy for me, can they withhold His mercy?' Say: 'Allah is enough for me. All those who truly trust put their trust in Him.'"[90]

His saying ﷺ, "Know that there is much good in patiently enduring that which you dislike," means that when the slave is patient under those painful afflictions which happen to him and which were decreed for him, that there is a great deal of good for him in patience.

In another narration, from ʿUmar the *mawlā* of Ghufrah and from others, from Ibn ʿAbbās there is another extra passage before these words which is, "If you are able to act for the sake of Allah with contentment in certainty, then do so. If you are not able, then in steadfastness under that which you dislike there is a great deal of good."

In another version narrated by ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās from his father, but whose chain of transmission is weak, there is another extra passage after this, which is that, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, how shall I act with certainty?' He answered, 'If you know that what happens to you could not miss you, and that what misses you could not happen to you, then you have established the process of certainty.'"

The meaning of this is that certainty of the preceding and completed decree reaching the heart helps the slave to make himself contented with what happens to him. Whoever is able to act certain of the decree and of destiny, contented with what is decreed, then let him do so. If he is not able to be contented, then there is a great deal of good in being patiently steadfast under that which he dislikes.

So these are two degrees of the *mu'min* with respect to the general and the particular decree of misfortunes:

First, that he is contented and pleased with that, and this is a high and exalted degree. Allah ﷻ says:

مَا أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ

"No misfortune occurs except by Allah's permission. Whoever has *īmān* in Allah – He will guide his heart."[91] ʿAlqamah said, "It is the misfortune which happens to a man, and he knows that it is from Allah and submits to it and is contented."

At-Tirmidhī narrated the hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah loves a people, He tests them. Whoever is contented, then He is contented with

him. Whoever is discontented, then He is discontented with him."[92] The Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

أَسْأَلُكَ الرِّضَا بَعْدَ الْقَضَاءِ

"I ask You for contentment after the decree."

One thing that will call the *mu'min* to be content with the decree is the realisation of his *īmān*, in the sense of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "Whenever Allah decrees a destiny for the *mu'min* it is good for him. If some good fortune happens to him he is grateful and it is good for him. If some hardship occurs to him he is patient and it is good for him. That is only for the *mu'min*."[93]

A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to advise him with comprehensive and concise advice, and he said to him, "Do not suspect Allah with respect to His decree."[94]

Abū'd-Dardā' said, "When Allah decrees something, He loves that [the slave] is contented with it." Ibn Masʿūd said, "By His justice and fairness, Allah has placed rest and joy in certainty and contentment, and He has placed worry and grief in doubt and

discontent. The one who is contented does not wish for anything other than the state he is in whether it is in difficult or comfortable circumstances." It is narrated similarly from ʿUmar, Ibn Masʿūd and others. ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, "I have become such that I only have happiness in the places of the general and particular decree." Whoever reaches this degree, then his life is entirely bliss and happiness. Allah, exalted is He, says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً

"Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a *mu'min*, We will give them a good life."[95] One of the right-acting first generations said, "The good life is contentment and satisfaction." ʿAbd al-Wahid ibn Zayd said, "Contentment is Allah's greatest door, the Garden of the world, and the worshippers' place of rest and ease."

The people of contentment sometimes see the wisdom of the One Who is testing them and of His choice for His slave in the trial, and that He cannot be suspected for His decree. Sometimes they see the reward of being contented with the decree so that it

makes them forget the pain of that which is decreed. Sometimes they see the greatness of the One Who is trying them and His majesty and perfection, and they become overwhelmed in witnessing that so much that they do not perceive the pain. This is what the elect of the people of gnosis and love attain to, so much so that they may even find pleasure in that which happens to them since they see it issuing from their Beloved, as one of them said, “He made them find sweetness in His affliction.” One of the Followers was asked about his state in his sickness and he said, “That which is most beloved to Him is most beloved to me.” As-Sirrī was asked, “Does the lover experience the pain of the trial?” And he answered, “No.” One of them said:

His torment of you is sweet
and His distance from you is nearness.
You with me are like my *rūḥ*,
rather, You are more beloved than it.
It is sufficient for me of love,
that I love that which You love.

The second degree is of those who are patient in affliction. This is for those who are unable to be

contented with the decree. Contentment is a virtue which is recommended and preferred, but steadfastness is an absolute obligation on the *mu'min*. There is a great deal of good in patience, because Allah commands it and promises a tremendous reward for it. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"The steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning."[96] He says:

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعونَ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

"But give good news to the steadfast: Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, 'We belong to Allah and to Him we will return.' Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided."[97] Al-Ḥasan said, "Contentment is rare and precious, but steadfastness (*ṣabr*) is the reliance of the *mu'min*."

The distinction between contentment and steadfastness is that steadfastness is to withhold and

restrain the self from discontentment while one experiences pain and wishes for its departure, and to restrain the limbs from acting from impatience. Contentment is the expansion of the breast and its expansiveness with respect to the decree and giving up wishing for the departure of that which causes pain even when one experiences pain, but, however, contentment lightens the pain because of the heart's embracing the spirit of certainty and gnosis. If the contentment is strong, it will completely drive away the experience of the pain as we said previously.

His saying ﷺ "Know that help is with steadfastness," is in accordance with His words ﷻ:

قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَاقُو اللَّهِ كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

"But those who were sure that they were going to meet Allah said, 'How many a small force has triumphed over a much greater one by Allah's permission! Allah is with the steadfast,"[98] and His words:

فَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّئَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِئَتَيْنِ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“If there are a hundred of you who are steadfast, they will overcome two hundred; and if there are a thousand of you, they will overcome two thousand with Allah’s permission. Allah is with the steadfast.”[99] ʿUmar asked some elderly men of Banī ʿAbs, “With what did you fight people?” They answered, “With steadfastness. When we met a people, we withstood (*ṣabr*) them as they withstood us.” One of the right-acting first generations said, “All of us dislike death and the pain of wounds, but we have different degrees of merit according to our steadfastness.” Al-Baṭṭāl said, “Courage is steadfastness for a time, and this is in the case of waging *jihād* on an outer enemy, i.e. *jihād* against the *kuffār*. It is similar for *jihād* against the inner enemy, i.e. the *jihād* against the self and whims, because *jihād* against the two of them is one of the greatest jihads as the Prophet ﷺ said, “The *mujāhid* is the one who struggles against himself for the sake of Allah.”[100]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar said to someone who asked him about *jihād*, “Begin with your self and wage *jihād* against it. Begin with your self, and mount expeditions against it.”

Baqiyyah ibn al-Walīd said, “Ibrāhīm ibn Adham told us, ‘Someone completely trustworthy narrated to us from ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib that he said, “The first thing of *jihād* which you will reject is the *jihād* against yourselves.”’”

Ibrāhīm ibn Abī ʿAblah said to some people who were returning from a military expedition, “You have returned from the lesser *jihād*, so what have you done about the greater *jihād*?” They asked, “What is the greater *jihād*?” He answered, “The heart’s *jihād*.” This has also been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith in a hadith of Jābir with a weak *isnād* whose wording is, “You have returned from the lesser *jihād* to the greater *jihād*.” They asked, “What is the greater *jihād*?” He answered, “The slave’s waging *jihād* on his desires.”[101]

It has been narrated in a hadith of Saʿd ibn Sinān from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Your enemy is not the one who if he kills you, it will put you in the Garden, and if you kill him, it will be a light for you. The worst enemy you have is your self which is between your two sides.”[102]

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه said in his parting advice to ʿUmar at the time he was appointing him as his successor, “The first thing that I warn you against is

your self which is between your sides." This *jihād* also requires steadfastness. Whoever is patiently steadfast in the struggle with his self, his desire and his *shayṭān*, will conquer and obtain help and victory, will come to obtain mastery over his self, and become a mighty king. Whoever is impatient and is not steadfast in struggling in *jihād* against that, will be overcome, conquered and imprisoned, and he will become a humble slave and prisoner in the hands of his *shayṭān* and his desire, as is said:

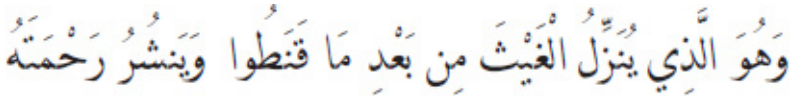
> When a man does not conquer his desire, it will
> put him
> in a station in which the mighty one is
> disgraced.

Ibn al-Mubārak said, "Whoever is steadfast, how little it is he has to be steadfast. Whoever is impatient, how little it is that he finds pleasure."

His saying "indeed help is with steadfastness" includes the help in both *jihāds*: the *jihād* of the outer enemy and the *jihād* of the inner enemy. Whoever is steadfast in both cases will be helped and will overcome his enemy, and whoever is not steadfast and is impatient about them will be overcome and he will

become a prisoner of his enemy or a victim slain by him.

His saying ﷺ, “Deliverance is with distress,” is confirmed by His words ﷻ:



“It is He who sends down abundant rain, after they have lost all hope, and unfolds His mercy”[103] and by the words of the Prophet ﷺ, “Our Lord laughs at the despair of His slave when his provisions are near.” Imam Aḥmad narrated it.[104] His son ʿAbdullāh narrated it also in a long hadith, in which there is, “Allah knows on the day of rain that it comes in sight of you while you are constricted and in despair, and so He remains laughing knowing that your provisions are near,”[105] meaning that He, glorious is He, is astonished at the despair of His slaves because of the rain’s being withheld, and their despairing of mercy, even though the moment approaches of His delivering and showing mercy to His slaves by sending down the rain to them, and His transforming their state, while they do not perceive. He says, exalted is He:

فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن قَبْلِهِ لَمُبْلِسِينَ

"When He makes it fall on those of His slaves He wills, they rejoice, even though before He sent it down on them they were in despair."[106] He says, exalted is He:

حَتَّى إِذَا اسْتَيْأَسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا

"Then when the Messengers despaired and thought themselves denied, Our help came to them,"[107] and He says:

حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

"...to the point that the Messenger and those who had *īmān* with him said, 'When is Allah's help coming?' Be assured that Allah's help is very near."[108] He says, narrating the words of Yaʿqūb, that he said to his sons:

يَا بَنِيَّ اذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِن يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

“My sons! Seek news of Yūsuf and his brother. Do not despair of solace from Allah.”[109] And then He tells the story of their gathering together right after that.

How often does He, glorious is He, tell the story of the deliverance from distress of His prophets once they had reached the very limit of distress, such as the deliverance of Nūḥ and those with him in the Ark, the deliverance of Ibrāhīm from the fire, His ransoming his son whom He had commanded him to sacrifice, the deliverance of Mūsā and his people from the sea and His drowning their enemy, the story of Ayyūb and Yūnus, the story of Muḥammad ﷺ and his enemies and his being rescued from them, such as his story in the cave, on the day of Badr, the day of Uḥud, the day of the Confederates, the day of Ḥunayn and so on.

His saying ﷻ, “With difficulty there is ease,” is derived from His saying, exalted is He:

سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْراً

“Allah will appoint after difficulty, ease,”[110] and His saying ﷻ:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْراً إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْراً

“For truly with hardship comes ease; truly with hardship comes ease.”[111]

Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad*, as did Ibn Abī Ḥātim in whose wording it is narrated here, the hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Even if hardship came and entered this burrow, ease would come to the point that it would enter after it and turn it out,” and then Allah revealed, “For truly with hardship comes ease; truly with hardship comes ease.”

Ibn Jarīr and others narrated the like of it from a hadith of al-Ḥasan which is a *mursal* hadith, and in his hadith there is, “So the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘One hardship will never overcome two eases.’”[112]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā related with his chain of transmission from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, “Even if hardship were to enter a burrow, ease would definitely come and enter with it,” and then he said, “Allah, exalted is He, says, ‘For truly with hardship comes ease; truly with hardship comes ease.’”[113] There is also with his chain of transmission that Abū ʿUbaydah was besieged, so ʿUmar wrote to him saying, “Whatever hardship happens to a man, Allah will make release after it, and one hardship will never overcome two eases, and He says:

اصْبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَاتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

‘be steadfast; be supreme in steadfastness; be firm on the battlefield; and have *taqwā* of Allah; so that hopefully you will be successful.’”[114] [115]

One of the subtle secrets of the pairing of deliverance with distress and ease with difficulty is that when distress becomes severe and very tremendous, and it reaches its limit, then the slave despairs of its removal by any creature, and his heart attaches itself to Allah alone, and this is the truth of reliance on Allah. It is one of the greatest means by which one can seek to meet one’s needs, since Allah suffices whoever relies on Him, as He says, exalted is He:

وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

“Whoever puts his trust in Allah – He will be enough for him.”[116]

Ādam ibn Abī Iyās narrated in his commentary on the Qur’ān with his chain of transmission from Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq that he said, “Mālik al-Ashjaʿī came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘My son ʿAwf has

been imprisoned.' So he said to him, 'Send the message to him that the Messenger of Allah orders you to say a great deal of "There is no power and no strength but by Allah."'[117] The messenger went to him and told him, and ʿAwf lowered his head and said, 'There is no power and no strength but by Allah.' They had tied him up with thongs, and the thongs dropped off him. He went out and there was a female camel which belonged to them and he mounted it. He went on and there were the cattle of the people who had tied him up. He shouted at them, and so the last of them followed the first of them. It was not long before he surprised his parents for there he was at the door. His father said, 'It is ʿAwf, by the Lord of the Kaʿbah!' His mother said, 'What a poor state! ʿAwf was in a terrible state, he was in pain because of the thongs [with which he was tied].' His father and a servant ran to him and found that ʿAwf had filled the courtyard with camels. He told his father the story of what had happened to him and about the camels. His father went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and told him the news of ʿAwf and the camels, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, 'Do with them what you want,

and whatever you would do with your own camels.' Then the *āyah* was revealed:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجاً وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

'Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out and provide for him from where he does not expect...'"[118] Al-Fuḍayl said, "If you were only to despair of people to the point of not wanting anything from them at all, your Master would give you everything you want." Ibrāhīm ibn Adham mentioned from one of them that he said, "None of those who ask, ask in a way which is more urgent than when the slave says, '*Mā shā'Allāh* – what Allah wills!'" He said, "Meaning by that, entrusting affairs to Allah ﷻ." Saʿīd ibn Salim al-Qaddah said, "It has reached me that Mūsā, peace and blessings be upon him, used to have a need which he required from Allah and which he asked for, but which was delayed, and so he said, 'What Allah wills!' and there was what he needed in front of him! He was astonished and so Allah revealed to him, 'Do you not know that your saying, "What Allah wills!" is the most successful means by which one can seek one's needs?'"

Also, when the *mu'min's* deliverance is delayed and he begins to despair of it after much supplication and humbling of himself, and the answer does not manifest itself, then he turns on himself and blames himself, and says to himself, "This has come from you. If there was any good in you, you would have been answered." This self-reproach is dearer to Allah than many acts of obedience, since it necessarily means that the slave is broken in humility towards his Master and his acknowledgement to Him that he deserves whatever trials come his way, and that he is unworthy of his supplication being answered. For that reason the answer to his supplication and the deliverance from his distress are hastened for him at that moment, because He, exalted is He, is with those whose hearts are broken because of Him.

Wahb said, "A man devoted himself to worship for some time, and then he came to have a need of something from Allah, so he fasted seventy Saturdays, eating only eleven dates each Saturday. Then he asked Allah for what he needed, but He did not give it to him. Then he turned on himself and said, 'This is from you. If there were any good in you, I would have been given what I need.' At that, an angel descended on him

and said, ‘Son of Ādam, this moment of yours is better than your worship which you did before, and Allah has discharged your need.’” Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated it.

One of the earlier generations said in this same sense:

It is probable that what you experience will not last and that you will see
deliverance from it from that with which time presses on.
It is probable that Allah will bring deliverance because He has,
everyday, some business for His creatures.
When difficulty emerges dispelling ease, then He, Allah, has decreed that difficulty is followed by ease.

1 Aḥmad (1:293), Abū Yaʿlā (2556)

2 A *mawlā* is a freed slave. It can sometimes denote a type of alliance in which an individual becomes the client (*mawlā*) of another tribe. Trans.

3 *Nūr al-iqtibās fī mishkāti waṣiyyat an-Nabī li-Ibn ʿAbbās*. It is published. Ed.

4 *ḥafīẓ* we have translated as “mindful” and is here translated by the Bewleys as “careful”. Trans.

5 Sūrah Qāf: 32-33

6 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 238

7 Sūrat al-Maʿārij: 34

8 Mālik (1:123), Abū Dāwūd (1420), an-Nasā’ī (1:230), Ibn Mājah (1401) and others

9 Aḥmad (2:169), ad-Dārimī (2:301) and Ibn Ḥibbān (1467)

10 *Istinjā’, wuḍū’, tayammum* and *ghusl*. Trans.

11 Aḥmad (5:282), ad-Dārimī (1:168) and Ibn Ḥibbān (1037)

12 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 89

13 At-Tirmidhī (2458), Aḥmad (1:387)

14 Although the Arabic word *baṭn* meaning abdomen, stomach, belly etc, has been used here. It is used in the broader sense of the interior of the human body. Ed.

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 235

16 Sūrat al-Isrā’: 36

17 Al-Ḥākim and *at-Tirmidhī* (2409)

18 Aḥmad (4:398)

19 Sūrat an-Nūr: 30

20 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 35

21 Sūrat al-Mu’minūn: 1-6

22 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 40

23 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 152

24 Sūrah Muḥammad: 7

25 Sūrat ar-Raʿd: 11

26 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (20216)

27 i.e. the time of death. Ed.

28 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (20247)

29 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (20245)

30 Aḥmad (2:25), Abū Dāwūd (5074), an-Nasā'ī (8:282) and others

31 Sūrat al-Kahf: 82

32 This is referring to the famous story of Mūsā and Khiḍr related in the Qur'ān. When they came upon a village of people who refused to host them, they found a wall in that village that was about to fall, Khiḍr erected it. When Mūsā asked why he hadn't asked for a reward, he said that the wall belonged to two orphaned boys and under it there was treasure that belonged to them and that their father was right-acting. "...and your Lord wanted them to come of age and then to unearth their treasure as a mercy from Him." (Sūrat al-Kahf: 82) The verse indicates that they were deserving of this mercy from Allah because of the right-action of their father. Trans.

33 Aḥmad (5:67)

34 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* with a good chain of transmission.

35 Al-Bukhārī (2714) and Muslim (6320)

36 Ibn Ḥibbān (934)

37 An-Nasā'ī *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (506), and others such as Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah

38 Sūrah Yūsuf: 24

39 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 24

40 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (15880)

41 Part of a long Hadith narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

42 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 128

43 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:340)

44 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 46

45 Sūrat ash-Shuʿarā': 62

46 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 40

47 Al-Bukhārī (3653), Muslim (2381) and others

48 Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 7

49 Sūrat an-Nisā': 108

50 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (10:324)

51 Sūrah Qāf: 16

52 Sūrat an-Najm: 32

53 Hadith 38 in this book.

54 At-Tirmidhī (3382)

55 Ibn Abī Ḥātim as mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr*

56 Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaffāt: 143-4

57 Sūrah Yūnus: 91

58 Sūrat al-Ḥashr: 18-19

59 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (4:192)

60 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 2

61 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (29:138)

62 Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 30

63 Ibn Abī Ḥātim as mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr*

64 Sūrat al-Fātiḥah:4

65 Sūrah Ghāfir: 60

66 Abū Dāwūd (1479), at-Tirmidhī (3247, 3372)

67 The best part or essence. Trans.

68 At-Tirmidhī (3371)

69 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 32

70 At-Tirmidhī (3571)

71 At-Tirmidhī (3373), Ibn Mājah (3287) and others

72 At-Tirmidhī (3612)

73 Muslim (1043) and others

74 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 2

75 Al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā’il an-nubuwwah* (6:107)

76 Al-Bukhārī (6321), Muslim (758)

77 Sūrah Yūnus: 107

78 Sūrah Fāṭir: 2

79 *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*

80 Part of a hadith narrated by Muslim (2664) and others

81 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 22

82 Muslim (2653)

83 Or “to that which is created for him.”

84 Muslim (2648)

85 Abū Dāwūd (4700), at-Tirmidhī (2155) and Aḥmad (5:317)

86 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 51

87 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 22

88 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 154

89 Aḥmad (6:441)

90 Sūrat az-Zumar: 38

91 Sūrat at-Taghābun: 11

92 At-Tirmidhī (2396)

93 Muslim (2999) and others

94 Aḥmad (4:204)

95 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 97

96 Sūrat az-Zumar: 10

97 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 155-7

98 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 249

99 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 66

100 Aḥmad (6:20,22), at-Tirmidhī (1621) and others

101 Al-Bayhaqī in *az-Zuhd* (374)

102 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī (3445)

103 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 28

104 Aḥmad (4:11,12) and Ibn Mājah (181)

105 ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmad in *Zawā'id al-Musnad* (4:13,14)

106 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 48

107 Sūrah Yūsuf: 110

108 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 214

109 Sūrah Yūsuf: 87

110 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 7

111 Sūrat al-Inshirah: 5-6

112 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (30:235)

113 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *aṣ-Ṣabr* as mentioned in *ad-Durr al-Manthūr*

114 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 200

115 Ibn Abī Shaybah (5:335) and others

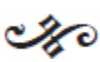
116 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 3

117 *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*

118 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 2-3

الحديث العشرون

عَنْ أَبِي مَسْعُودٍ البَدْرِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿إِنَّ مِمَّا أَدْرَكَ النَّاسُ مِنْ كَلَامِ النُّبُوَّةِ الأُولَى: إِذَا لَمْ تَسْتَحْيِ؛ فَاصْنَعْ مَا شِئْتَ﴾. رَوَاهُ البُخَارِيُّ.



Shame and Modesty

Abū Masʿūd ʿUqbah ibn ʿAmr al-Anṣārī al-Badri ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'A part of that which people understood from the speech of the first prophethood is: If you have no shame (*ḥayā'*)[1], do what you want'." Al-Bukhārī narrated it (3483).

Al-Bukhārī narrated this hadith in the version of Manṣūr ibn al-Muʿtamir from Ribʿī ibn Ḥirāsh from Abū Masʿūd from the Prophet ﷺ, and I think that Muslim did not narrate it for the reason that a group of people had narrated it, saying that it was from Ribʿī from Ḥudhayfah from the Prophet ﷺ and thus differed about his chain of transmission. However, most of those who memorise hadith judge that the right position is that of those who say that it is from Abū

Masʿūd, among whom were al-Bukhārī, Abū Zurʿah ar-Rāzī, ad-Dāraquṭnī and others. Something that shows the soundness of that is that it is narrated in another way from Abū Masʿūd in the narration of Masrūq from him.[2] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī also narrated it from a hadith of Abū'ṭ-Ṭufayl from the Prophet ﷺ.

His saying ﷺ, "A part of that which people understood from the speech of the first prophethood," indicates that this is transmitted from the ancient prophets, and that people passed it back and forward between them, and other generations inherited it from them, generation by generation. This shows that the preceding prophethoods brought these words, and that they were famous and well known to people until they came to the first of this community. In one of the versions there is that he said, "People did not grasp anything of the first prophethood except for this." Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh and others narrated it.

Concerning his saying ﷺ, "If you have no shame, do what you want," there are two interpretations. First, that it does not mean the command to do whatever one wants, but that rather it is in the sense of censure and of prohibition of it. The people who take this position have arrived at it by ways. First, that

the meaning of the imperative “Do!” is of the nature of a threat, meaning, “If you have no shame then do what you want, for Allah will pay you back for it,” as in His words:

اعْمَلُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

“Do what you like. He sees whatever you do.”[3] And His words:

فَاعْبُدُوا مَا شِئْتُم مِّن دُونِهِ

“So worship anything you will apart from Him!”[4] and the saying of the Prophet ﷺ “Whoever sells wine, then let him be a butcher of pigs!”[5] meaning let him cut them up either to sell them or to eat them. The likes of this type of expression are very numerous. This is the interpretation chosen by a large group among whom is Abū’l-ʿAbbās Thaʿlab.

The second way, interprets it as being a command with the meaning of ‘informing’ i.e. [informing us] that someone who is not ashamed will do whatever they want, because the thing that prevents the perpetration of ugly acts is the sense of shame or modesty. Someone who does not have a sense of

modesty will abandon himself to every indecent and repugnant behaviour and the likes of things those who have modesty refrain from. It is in the manner of his saying ﷺ, "Whoever deliberately lies about me, let him take his seat in the Fire,"[6] since the expression is in the imperative form but is meant as a notification that whoever deliberately tells a lie about him will take his seat in the Fire. This is the chosen interpretation of Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām رحمه الله, Ibn Qutaybah, Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī and others. Abū Dāwūd narrated of Imam Aḥmad that which would show the like of this position.

Ibn Lahīʿah narrated from Abū Qabīl from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah hates a slave, He removes modesty from him. If He strips him of modesty, He will only receive him as one who is hateful and who loathes himself and He strips him of trust (*amānah*). When He strips him of trust (*amānah*), He strips him of mercy. If He strips him of mercy, He strips him of the bond of Islam, and if He strips him of the bond of Islam, He will only receive him as a rebellious *shayṭān*."[7] Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh narrated this, and Ibn Mājah narrated the

same sense with a weak chain of transmission from Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

Salmān al-Fārisī said, “When Allah intends the destruction of a slave, He strips him of shame. When He strips of shame, He will only receive him as someone who is hateful and full of self-loathing. When he is someone who is hateful and full of self-loathing, He strips him of trust, and then He will only receive him as someone who is mistrusted and treacherous. If he is someone who is mistrusted and treacherous, then He strips him of mercy, and so He only receives him as someone who is harsh and coarse. If he is someone who is harsh and coarse, then He strips the halter-rope of *īmān* from his neck. When He strips the halter-rope of *īmān* from his neck, He only receives him as an accursed *shayṭān*.”[8]

Ibn ʿAbbās said, “Shame and *īmān* are in a single plait of rope, so that when one of them is removed the other follows it.” Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh narrated all of it in the book *al-Adab*.

The Prophet ﷺ regarded modesty as a part of *īmān*, as is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn ʿUmar that, “The Prophet ﷺ passed by a man while he was remonstrating with his brother about his bashfulness

(*ḥayā*'), saying, 'Really, you are [too] bashful,' as if he was saying, 'It is causing you harm,' so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Leave him alone, for modesty is a part of *īmān*.'"[9]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that he said, "Modesty is a branch of *īmān*."[10]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Modesty only produces good." In a version of Muslim's there is that he said, "Modesty is good, all of it," or he said, "Modesty, all of it is good."[11]

Imam Aḥmadandan-Nasā'ī narratedthe hadith of al-Ashajjal-ʿAṣrī[12] thathe said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'You have two qualities of character which Allah loves.' I said, 'What are they?' He said, 'Equanimity and modesty.' I said, 'Are these ancient [having been decreed by Allah] or are they recent [something learnt]?' He said, 'No, they are ancient.' I said, 'Praise belongs to Allah Who created me with two qualities of character which Allah loves.'"[13]

Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Khālid said, "ʿUyaynah ibn Ḥiṣn went in to visit the Prophet ﷺ with whom there was another man and he asked for a drink. He was brought water and he drank, and so the Prophet ﷺ veiled him.

So he said, ‘What is this?’ He said, ‘Modesty is a natural disposition which they have been given and which you [all] have been refused.”[14]

Know that there are two types of modesty:

First, that which is a quality of character and an innate disposition which has not been acquired, and it is one of the most noble qualities of character which Allah bestows on the slave and upon which He forms him. For this reason he said ﷺ “Modesty only produces good,” because it restrains the person from committing ugly acts and from showing mean qualities of character, and it urges the use of the noble and exalted qualities of character, and so it is one of the qualities of *īmān* by this reckoning. It has been narrated from ʿUmar رضي الله عنه that he said, “Whoever shows modesty, hides himself. Whoever hides himself has *taqwā*. Whoever has *taqwā* will be protected.”

Al-Jarrāḥ ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥakamī said – and among the people of Sham he possessed intuitive insight (*firāsah*) – “I left wrong actions out of modesty for forty years and then scrupulousness[15] came over me.” One of them said, “I regarded acts of disobedience as despicable and so I gave them up out

of a sense of honour[16] and then it became transformed into *dīn*."

The second type is that which is acquired from knowledge of Allah and of His greatness and of His nearness to His slaves and His knowledge of them and of the deceptions of the eyes and that which the breasts conceal. This is one of the highest attributes of *īmān*, indeed it is one of the highest ranks of *iḥsān*. We have seen previously that the Prophet ﷺ said to a man, "Be modest before Allah with the modesty [you would show before] a right-acting man from your close relatives."

In the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd there is that, "Modesty before Allah is that you guard the head and what it contains, and guard the belly and what it encloses and that you remember death and decomposition. Whoever wants the *ākhirah* gives up the ornamentation of the world. Whoever does that is certainly modest before Allah." Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

Modesty before Allah may develop from becoming acquainted with His blessings, exalted is He, and seeing that one falls short in showing gratitude for them.

When the slave is stripped of both acquired and innate modesty nothing remains to prevent him from the perpetration of ugly acts and evincing despicable qualities of character, so that he becomes as if he has no *īmān*. It is narrated from one of the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan which he ascribed directly to the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "There are two types of modesty: [one which is] a part of *īmān*, and another which is inability." But perhaps this is actually the words of al-Ḥasan. Bushayr ibn Kaʿb said something similar to ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn, "We find in some of the books that some of it is serenity and dignity for the sake of Allah, and some of it is weakness." So ʿImrān became angry and said, "I narrate to you from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and you contradict it!"

The matter is as ʿImrān said ﷺ because by the modesty which is praised in the words of the Prophet ﷺ all that is meant is the quality of character which urges one to beautiful deeds and to abandon ugly deeds. As for weakness and inability which necessarily require that one fall short somewhat in discharging what is due to Allah or what is due to His slaves, that has no part in modesty, but it is only weakness,

feebleness, inability and humiliation, and Allah knows best.

The second position on the meaning of his words, "If you have no shame (*ḥayā'*), do what you want," is that it is a command to do what one wants as is the literal meaning of the words, and that it means that if the thing which you want to do is something for which you need have no shame of doing, not in front of Allah nor in front of people because it is one of the acts of obedience or because it is one of the beautiful qualities of character and courtesy then at that time do whatever of it you want. This is the position of a substantial group of the imams, of whom are Abū Isḥāq al-Marwazī ash-Shāfiʿī, and something similar is narrated of Imam Aḥmad. It occurs in that way in some copies of the *Masā'il Abī Dāwūd* in the abridged form of it, however what is in the complete copies which are reliable is as we have related from him before, and as al-Khalāl narrated of him in the book *al-Adab*. An example of it is the saying of one of the right-acting first generations when he was asked about [manly] honour (*murū'ah*) and he answered, "It is that you don't do anything in secret of which you would be ashamed if you were to do it publicly." We will see the

saying of the Prophet ﷺ "*Ithm* (wrongdoing) is that which becomes agitated in your self and which you would hate for people to discover," in its proper place in this book if Allah, exalted is He, wills.[17]

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrated in his book from Maʿmar from Abū Isḥāq from a man from Muzaynah that he said, "Someone said, 'Messenger of Allah, what is the best thing which a Muslim man has been given?' He said, 'Good character.' He said, 'What is the worst thing a Muslim has been given?' He answered, 'If you dislike that something should be seen on you in the assemblies of people, then do not do it when you are alone.'"[18]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān, Usāmah ibn Sharīk said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Whatever thing Allah dislikes for you, then do not do it when you are alone.'"[19]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of Abū Mālik al-Ashʿarī that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, what is the completion of *birr* [good treatment and solicitous concern for others, encompassing good behaviour towards Allah, parents and strangers]?' He answered, "It is that you do secretly what [you ordinarily] do publicly.'"[20] He also narrated it in a

hadith of Abū ʿĀmir asSukūnī that he said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah...’” and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.[21]

ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Saʿīd the Ḥāfiẓ narrated in the book *Adab al-muḥaddith* with his chain of transmission from Ḥarmalah ibn ʿAbdullāh that he said, “I came to the Prophet ﷺ to increase in knowledge, and so I stood in front of him and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, what do you order me to do?’ He answered, ‘Do that which is right and avoid the wrong. Look at that good which your ears hear people saying to you when you stand up to leave them and do it. Look at that which you would dislike the people to say to you when you stand to leave them and avoid it.’ He said, ‘So I looked, and it became clear that they, his two commands, did not leave out anything: doing the right and avoiding the wrong.’”[22]

Ibn Saʿd narrated it in his *Ṭabaqāt* in the same sense.

Abū ʿUbayd told, concerning the meaning of the hadith, another statement which he narrated from Jarīr, that he said, “It means that a man intends to do good and leaves it out of modesty before people as if he is afraid of showing off, so it (the hadith) says, ‘Let

not modesty prevent from doing what you meant to do,' as it has been narrated in the hadith, 'If *shayṭān* comes to you while you are praying and says, "You are showing off," then make it longer.'" Then Abū ʿUbayd said, "Neither the overall sense nor the actual wording of this hadith support this explanation, and people do not interpret it in this way."

I say that if it were as Jarīr said, then the wording of the hadith would have been, "If you are ashamed of that for which you should not be ashamed, then do what you want." The remoteness of this from the words and sense of the hadith is not hidden, and Allah knows best.

1 *Ḥayā'* in Arabic signifies both shame and shyness or modesty.

2 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (20149)

3 Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 40

4 Sūrat az-Zumar: 15

5 Abū Dāwūd (3489), Aḥmad (4:253), Ibn Abī Shaybah (6:445,446) and others

6 Al-Bukhārī (110), Muslim (3) and many others. This hadith is very famous to the extent that it is considered to be *mutawātir* (transmitted by numerous chains of transmission). Ed.

7 As-Suyūṭī mentioned this hadith in *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr* and ascribed it to al-Bayhaqī.

8 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:204)

9 Al-Bukhārī (24), Muslim (36)

10 Al-Bukhārī (9), Muslim (35)

11 Al-Bukhārī (6117), Muslim (37)

12 A second edition has “al-Munqarī”.

13 An-Nasā’ī in *Faḍā’il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* (210), Aḥmad (4:206) and others

14 Ibn Abī Shaybah (8:524)

15 *Waraʿ* “scrupulousness” means that he left things that are *ḥalāl* for fear of the *ḥarām*. Trans.

16 *Murū’ah* “manliness” is not the exclusive preserve of men and means a sense of honour. Trans.

17 Hadith 27.

18 *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (20151)

19 Ibn Ḥibbān (403)

20 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (3420)

21 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī (22:317)

22 Aḥmad (4:305), al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (222) and others.

الحديث الحادي والعشرون

عَنْ سُفْيَانَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! قُلْ لِي فِي الإِسْلامِ قَوْلاً لا أَسْأَلُ عَنْهُ أَحَدًا غَيْرَكَ، قالَ: ﴿قُلْ: آمَنْتُ بِاللهِ، فَاسْتَقِمْ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Istiqāmah

Abū ʿAmr, and it is said Abū ʿAmrah, Sufyān ibn ʿAbdullāh ﷺ said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, say to me something on Islam about which I will not ask anyone other than you'. He said, 'Say, "I have *īmān* in Allah" then go straight [ahead][1]'." Muslim narrated it (38).

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Hishām ibn ʿUrwah from his father from Sufyān, who is Ibn ʿAbdullāh ath-Thaqafī aṭ-Ṭā'ifī and he was a companion. He was governor of Ṭā'if on behalf of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

It has been narrated from Sufyān ibn ʿAbdullāh in other ways with some extra matter. Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah narrated it from a version of az-Zuhrī from Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn

Māʿiz and in the version of at-Tirmidhī there is from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Māʿiz from Sufyān ibn ʿAbdullāh that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me something to which I can hold fast.' He said, 'Say, "My Lord is Allah," and then go straight [ahead].' I said, 'Messenger of Allah, what is the most fearful thing you fear for me?' And so he took hold of his own tongue and said, 'This.'" At-Tirmidhī said, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith."

Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated a version of ʿAbdullāh ibn Sufyān ath-Thaqafī from his father that, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, command me some matter of Islam about which I will not ask anyone else after you.' He said, 'Say, "I have *īmān* in Allah," and then go straight.' I said, 'Of what should I be wary?' And he indicated his tongue."

The saying of Sufyān ibn ʿAbdullāh to the Prophet ﷺ "Say to me something on Islam about which I will not ask anyone other than you," is a request for him to teach him some comprehensive words on the matter of Islam which would be sufficient so that he would not need anything else after them. So the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Say, 'I have *īmān* in Allah,' and then go straight [ahead]." In another version there is, "Say,

‘My Lord is Allah,’ and then go straight [ahead].” This is derived from His words ﷻ:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

“The angels descend on those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and then go straight: ‘Do not fear and do not grieve but rejoice in the Garden you have been promised.’”[2] And His words ﷻ:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“Those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and then go straight will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. Such people are the Companions of the Garden, remaining in it timelessly, for ever, as repayment for what they did.”[3] An-Nasā’ī narrated in his commentary in a narration from Suhayl ibn Abī Ḥazm, “Thābit told us from Anas that, ‘The Prophet ﷺ recited, “Those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and then go straight,” and then said, “[Some] people say it and then they become *kuffār*. Whoever dies on it [while still believing in it and acting by it] is one of the people

who go straight."" At-Tirmidhī narrated it, and in his wording there is, "He said, '[Some] people say it and then most of them become *kuffār*. Whoever dies upon it [while still believing it and acting by it] is one of those who go straight.'" He said, "It is a good but unusual hadith. Some people have spoken [in a critical fashion] about Suhayl's memory."

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq spoke in commentary of, "then they go straight", and said, "They do not associate anything as a partner with Allah." There is also that he said, "They do not turn to a god other than Him." There is also that he said, "Then they go on unswervingly [confirming] that Allah is their Lord."

There is from Ibn ʿAbbās with a weak chain of transmission that he said, "This is the most tender *āyah* in the book of Allah, '...who say, "Our Lord is Allah" and then go straight' [i.e.] witnessing that there is no god but Allah."[4] The like of this is narrated of Anas, Mujāhid, al-Aswad ibn Hilāl, Zayd ibn Aslam, as-Suddī, ʿIkrimah and others.

It is narrated that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb recited this *āyah* on the mimbar, "Those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then go straight..." and said, "They do not

turn deceitfully this way and that in the way that the fox does."[5]

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās concerning His words, exalted is He, "Those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then go straight..." that he said, "They unswervingly continue with the discharge of His obligations."[6] Abū'l-ʿĀliyah said, "Then they make their *dīn* and their deeds purely for His sake."[7] Qatādah said, "They unswervingly continue in obedience to Allah." When al-Ḥasan recited this *āyah* he said:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنتَ رَبُّنَا فَارْزُقْنَا الْإِسْتِقَامَةَ

"O Allah, You are our Lord, so provide us with continuing unswervingly straight ahead."

Perhaps those who say that what is meant here is continuing unswervingly in *tawḥīd* only mean the complete and perfect *tawḥīd* which will prevent its possessor from entering the Fire, which is the detailed realisation of "There is no god but Allah," because 'the god' is He Who is obeyed and Who is not disobeyed because of fear, exaltation of Him, awe, love, hope, reliance and supplication. All acts of disobedience

corrode this *tawḥīd* since they are responding to the motivation of one's desire, which is *shayṭān*. Allah ﷻ says:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ

"Have you seen him who takes his whims and desires to be his god?"[8] AlḤasan and others said, "He is the one who whenever he desires something does it," and this negates going unswervingly straight ahead in *tawḥīd*.

As for the version of those who narrate it as, "Say, 'I have *īmān* in Allah,'" then the meaning is more obvious, because right actions are comprised under *īmān* according to the right-acting first generations and those who follow them of the people of hadith. Allah ﷻ says:

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَمَن تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"Go straight as you have been commanded, and also those who turn with you to Allah, and do not exceed the bounds. He sees what you do."[9] He commands that he should go straight, he and those

who turn in *tawbah* with him, and that they should not exceed that which they are ordered to do, which is going exorbitantly beyond the limits (*ṭughyān*), and He informs us that He sees their actions and that He overlooks them. He says, exalted is He:

فَلِذَٰلِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

"So call and go straight as you have been ordered to. Do not follow their whims and desires."[10] Qatādah said, "Muḥammad ﷺ was commanded to continue unswervingly in [obedience to] the command of Allah." Ath-Thawrī said, ...[in obedience to] the Qur'ān." Al-Ḥasan said, "When this *āyah* was revealed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ hastened to exert himself energetically and he was not seen laughing." Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated it. Al-Qushayrī and others mentioned from someone that he saw the Prophet ﷺ in dream and he said to him, "Messenger of Allah, you said, 'Hūd and its sisters have turned my hair grey,' what was it in them that turned your hair grey?" He said, "His words, 'Go straight as you have been ordered.'" He said ﷺ:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَى إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَاسْتَقِيمُوا إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ

"Say: 'I am only a human being like yourselves. It is revealed to me that your god is One God. So be straight with Him and ask His forgiveness.'"[11]

Allah, exalted is He, in general commands us to establish the *dīn*, as He says:

شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحاً وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ

"He has laid down the same *dīn* for you as He enjoined on Nūḥ: that which We have revealed to you and which We enjoined on Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and ʿĪsā: 'Establish the *dīn* and do not make divisions in it.'"[12] And He commands us to establish the prayer in more than one place in His Book, just as He commands us to continue unswervingly forward in *tawḥīd* in these two *āyāt*.

Istiqāmah (continuing unswervingly forward) is travelling the straight path (*aṣ-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*) and it is the correct *dīn* (*ad-dīn al-qayyim*) without turning away from it to the right and the left. It comprises doing all acts of obedience, those which are outward and those which are inward, and similarly giving up

all acts which are forbidden, so that this piece of advice [in this hadith] becomes one which comprehensively contains all attributes of the *dīn*.

In His words ﷻ:

فَاسْتَقِيمُوا إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ

"So be straight with Him and ask His forgiveness," there is an indication that it is unavoidable that there will be shortcomings in the going unswervingly straight ahead with which we are commanded, and that that is repaired by the act of seeking forgiveness, which is a requirement of turning in *tawbah*, and returning to travelling unswervingly straight ahead. So that it is like the words of the Prophet ﷺ to Muʿādh, "Have *taqwā* of Allah wherever you are and follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it." The Prophet ﷺ already informed us that people are unable to travel unswervingly straight ahead as they ought, as Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated in the hadith of Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Go unswervingly straight ahead and you will not be able to fully accomplish [it]. Know that the best of your actions is the prayer. Only a *mu'min* safeguards *wuḍū*'."

In the narration of Imam Aḥmad ﷺ, “Hit the mark or close to it. Only a *mu’min* safeguards *wuḍū*’.”

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Hit the mark or close to it.”[13]

Hitting the mark is the reality of going unswervingly straight ahead, and it is to hit the mark in every word and deed and in all purposes and intentions, just as the one who shoots at the target and hits it. The Prophet ﷺ ordered ʿAlī to ask Allah for [the quality of] hitting the mark and guidance, and he said to him, “Remember by hitting the mark, your directing the arrow [to its target] aright, and by guidance, your guiding [someone] on the pathway.”

Coming close to it is that someone hits that which is close to the target if he doesn’t hit the target itself, but with the proviso that he should be determined to hit the mark and strike the target, so that his coming close to the target [and not hitting it] is unintentional. The words of the Prophet ﷺ show that, in the hadith of al-Ḥakam ibn Ḥazan al-Kulafī, “People, you will never do or you will never be able to do everything that I tell you, but aim to hit the mark and rejoice,”[14] meaning, intend to direct things aright and to hit the

mark and to go unswervingly straight ahead, because if they aim to hit the mark in every action, they will have done everything that they have been commanded to do.

So the origin of going unswervingly straight ahead is the heart's continuing unswervingly in *tawḥīd*, as Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq and others explained His words, "Those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then go straight...," that they do not turn aside to other than Him. Whenever the heart continues unswervingly straight in gnosis of Allah and in fear of Him, exaltation of Him, awe of Him, love of Him, wanting Him, hoping for Him, supplicating Him, relying on Him and turning away from other than Him, then all the limbs will continue unswervingly in obedience to Him, because the heart is the king of the limbs, and they are its troops. When the king goes unswervingly straight ahead, so do his troops and subjects. It is in that manner that His words, exalted is He:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفاً

"So set your face firmly towards the *Dīn*, as a pure natural believer,"[15] are explained to mean to intend

Allah purely and to want Him alone without partner.

The most serious thing among the limbs that one must shepherd so as to be sure that it goes aright is the tongue, since it is the translator of the heart and that which expresses what is in it. It is for that reason that when the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to go unswervingly straight ahead, he advised him after that to safeguard his tongue.

In the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad there is from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The slave's *īmān* will not be unswerving until his heart is unswerving, and his heart will not be unswerving until his tongue is unswerving." In the version of *at-Tirmidhī* from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī which is transmitted both as a *marfūʿ* hadith and a *mawqūf* statement, "When the son of Ādam rises in the morning, all of the limbs humble themselves to the tongue and say, 'Fear Allah for our sake, because we are only with you. If you are unswerving we will be unswerving, but if you swerve aside, we will swerve aside."[16]

1 *Istaqim* "go straight [ahead]" or "continue unswervingly forward", means to go straight ahead without swerving aside or deviating from the truth. It also has an implicit meaning of being

“upright” and “upstanding” deriving as it does from the verb *qāma* “he stood”. Trans.

2 Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 30

3 Sūrat al-Aḥqāf: 13

4 Ibn Kathīr ascribed this to Ibn Abī Ḥātim in his *tafsīr*

5 Ibn al-Mubārak in *az-Zuhd* (325) and *aṭ-Ṭabarī Jāmiᶜ al-bayān*

6 Aṭ-Ṭabarī (24:115)

7 Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr*

8 Sūrat al-Jāthiyah: 23

9 Sūrah Hūd: 112

10 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 15

11 Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 6

12 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 13

13 Al-Bukhārī (6098), Muslim (2816)

14 Abū Dāwūd (1096), Aḥmad (4:212)

15 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 30

16 At-Tirmidhī (2407), Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr*

الحديث الثاني والعشرون

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عنهُما : أَنَّ رَجُلاً سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ ، فَقَالَ : أَرَأَيْتَ إِذَا صَلَّيْتُ الْمَكْتُوبَاتِ ، وَصُمْتُ رَمَضَانَ ، وَأَحْلَلْتُ الْحَلالَ ، وَحَرَّمْتُ الْحَرَامَ ، وَلَمْ أَزِدْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا ؛ أَ أَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ؟ قَالَ : ﴿ نَعَمْ ﴾ . رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ .

The Obligations

Abū ʿAbdullāh Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī ﷺ said, "A man asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'What do you think, if I pray the obligatory prayers, fast Ramaḍān, and consider *ḥalāl* that which is *ḥalāl* and consider *ḥarām* that which is *ḥarām*, and I do not add anything to that, shall I enter the Garden?' He said, 'Yes'." Muslim narrated it (15). The meaning of "I consider *ḥarām* that which is *ḥarām*" is "I avoid it", and the meaning of "I consider *ḥalāl* that which is *ḥalāl*" is "I do it believing that it is *ḥalāl*."

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Abū'z-Zubayr from Jābir, and he added at the end of it, "He said, 'By Allah! I will not do anything more than that.'" He also narrated it in a version of al-Aʿmash from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Sufyān from Jābir in

which he said, “An-Nu’man ibn Qawqal asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what do you think if I pray the obligatory [prayers], and I consider that which is *ḥarām* to be *ḥarām*, and I consider that which is *ḥalāl* to be *ḥalāl*, and I don’t do anything more than that, shall I enter the Garden?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Yes.’”

Some explain ‘considering *ḥalāl* that which is *ḥalāl*’ to mean believing firmly that it is *ḥalāl*, and ‘considering *ḥarām* that which is *ḥarām*’ to mean believing firmly that it is *ḥarām* as well as avoiding it. It may also mean that ‘considering *ḥalāl* that which is *ḥalāl*’ means to actually partake of it, the *ḥalāl* here being an expression denoting [not just that which is permissible but also] everything which is not *ḥarām*, so that it comprises what is obligatory, recommended and permitted. The meaning would then be that one does what is not forbidden to one, and that one doesn’t transgress and go beyond the *ḥalāl* to what is not *ḥalāl*, and that one avoids what is forbidden. It has been narrated from a party of the right-acting first generations, among them Ibn Masʿūd and Ibn ʿAbbās, concerning His words ﷻ:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ

“Those to whom We have given the Book, who recite it in the way it should be recited, such people have *īmān* in it,”[1] that they said, “They consider *ḥalāl* that which it declares *ḥalāl*, and they consider *ḥarām* that which it declares *ḥarām*, and they do not alter its words from their proper meanings.”[2]

What is meant by considering *ḥalāl* and considering *ḥarām*, is to do that which is *ḥalāl* and avoid that which is *ḥarām* as is mentioned in this hadith. Allah, exalted is He, says with respect to the *kuffār* who used to change the months in which it was forbidden [to fight]:

إِنَّمَا النَّسِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُضَلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُحِلُّونَهُ عَاماً وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ عَاماً لِّيُوَاطِؤُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فَيُحِلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ

“Deferring a sacred (*ḥarām*) month is an increase in *kufr* by which the *kuffār* lead many people astray.[3] One year they make it profane (ḥalāl) and another sacred (*ḥarām*) to tally with the number Allah has made sacred,”[4] meaning that one year they used to fight in the sacred month and thus make it profane [i.e. regard it as permissible to fight within it], and then another year they would refrain from fightinginit, andthus make itsacredby that[i.e. regard it as *ḥarām* to

fight in it, when in fact the *ḥarām* months are fixed months in every year].

Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"You who have *īmān*! do not make *ḥarām* the good things Allah has made *ḥalāl* for you, and do not overstep the limits. Allah does not love people who overstep the limits. Eat the *ḥalāl* and good things Allah has provided for you."[5] This *āyah* was revealed because some people refused to consume some wholesome things because of doing-without (*zuhd*) in the world, deliberately choosing to live in a harsh manner, and some of them forbade these things to themselves, either by swearing an oath to do so or by considering it *ḥarām* for them, but none of that necessarily causes to actually become *ḥarām*. Some of them abstained from them without swearing an oath and without considering them *ḥarām*, but all of these cases are named "making [the wholesome things] *ḥarām*" because of intending to abstain from them in order to harm the self and withhold it from its appetites. It is said idiomatically that so-and-so does

not regard as *ḥalāl* [what is *ḥalāl*] and does not regard as *ḥarām* [what is *ḥarām*] if he does not refrain from doing *ḥarām* things and does not stay within the limits of what is permitted him, even if he firmly believes in the forbidden nature of what is *ḥarām* and regards it as a forbidden action but does not beware of it thus making it permissible for himself even though he does not believe that it is permissible.

In any case, this hadith shows that whoever undertakes the obligations, and avoids the prohibited things, will enter the Garden. The hadith from the Prophet ﷺ in this sense are transmitted by numerous chains of transmission (*mutawātir*) or very close. As in the narration of an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, al-Ḥākim in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah and Abū Saʿīd, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any slave who performs the five prayers, fasts Ramaḍān, pays the *zakāh* and avoids the seven major wrong actions[6], will have the gates of the Garden opened for him and he will enter by whichever of them he wishes," then he recited:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

"If you avoid the serious wrong actions you have been forbidden, We will erase your bad actions from

you and admit you by a Gate of Honour."[7] [8]

Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated from a hadith of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever worships Allah not associating anything with Him, establishes the prayer, pays the *zakāh*, fasts Ramaḍān and avoids the major wrong actions, then the Garden is his," or, "he will enter the Garden."[9]

There is in the *Musnad* from Ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنهما that Damam ibn Thaʿlabah went in a deputation to the Prophet ﷺ and he mentioned to him the five prayers, the fast, *zakāh*,Ḥajj and all of the requirements of the *Sharīʿah* of Islam. When he had finished, he said, "I witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and that I will discharge these obligations and avoid that which you have forbidden me to do, and that I will not do more or less than that."The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If he is truthful, he will enter the Garden."[10] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it in another way, and in his hadith there is that he said, "The fifth, I have no need of," meaning sexual indecencies, and then he said, "I and whoever obeys me will act according to these." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If he is truthful, he will definitely enter the Garden."[11]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī ﷺ that a man said to the Prophet ﷺ "Tell me about an action which will enter me into the Garden." He said, "[It is that] you worship Allah not associating anything with Him, you establish the prayer, pay the *zakāh*, and that you join ties of kinship."[12] Muslim narrated it with the difference that he said, "Tell me about an action which will draw me closer to the Garden and make me far away from the Fire." He has in another version, "So when he turned and went away, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If he holds on tight to that which he has been commanded, he will enter the Garden."[13]

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that a nomadic desert Arab said, "Messenger of Allah, show me an action which if I do it, it will cause me to enter the Garden." He said, "[It is that] you worship Allah not associating anything with Him, you establish the obligatory prayer, pay the obligatory *zakāh* and fast Ramaḍān." He said, "By the One Who sent you with the truth, I will never add anything extra to this nor will I deduct anything from it." When he went away, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever would

like to look upon a man from among the people of the Garden, then let him look at this one."[14]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ṭalḥah ibn ʻUbaydillah ﷺ that, "A nomadic desert Arab came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a dishevelled state and said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me what prayer Allah has made obligatory for me to do.' He said, 'The five prayers unless you voluntarily do something extra.' He said, 'Tell me what fasting Allah has made obligatory on me.' He said, 'The month of Ramaḍān unless you voluntarily do something extra.' He said, 'Tell me what *zakāh* Allah has made obligatory on me.' So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told him of the requirements of the *Sharīʿah* of Islam, and he said, 'By the One Who ennobled you with the truth, I will not do any extra optional actions and I will not decrease in any way that which Allah has made obligatory on me.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'He will be successful if he is truthful,' or 'he will enter the Garden if he is truthful.'" The wording is that of al-Bukhārī.[15]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Anas ﷺ that a nomadic desert Arab questioned the Prophet ﷺ and then he mentioned the same sense [as above] and he added, "The Ḥajj of the House for whoever is able to

take a way to it." Then he said, "By the One Who sent you with the truth, I will not do any more or any less than them," and so the Prophet ﷺ said, "If he is truthful, he will definitely enter the Garden."

What the nomad meant was that he would not do any optional actions over and above the obligatory prayer, the obligatory *zakāh*, the fast of Ramaḍān and the Ḥajj of the House. He did not mean that he would not do any of the obligatory requirements of the *Sharīʿah* apart from these. These hadith do not mention avoiding what is prohibited, because the questioner only asked about the actions by which the one who does them would enter the Garden.

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith that Abū Umāmah ؓ said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivering the address (*khuṭbah*) during the Farewell Pilgrimage saying, 'People, have *taqwā* of Allah, pray your five [prayers], fast your month [of Ramaḍān], pay the *zakāh* on your wealth, and obey the one who has authority over you and you will enter the Garden of your Lord.'" He said it is a good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith. Imam Aḥmad narrated it and he has it as, "Worship your Lord," instead of his saying, "Have *taqwā* of Allah." Baqī ibn Mukhallad narrated it in his *Musnad* in

another version and the wording of his hadith is, “Pray your five [prayers], fast your month [of Ramaḍān], perform the Ḥajj of your House, and pay the *zakāh* of your wealth, cheerfully, and you will enter the Garden of your Lord.”[16]

Imam Aḥmad narrated with his chain of transmission from Ibn Muntafiq that he said, “I came to the Prophet ﷺ when he was on ʿArafāt and I said, ‘[There are] two things which I want to ask you about: what will save me from the Fire, and what will enter me into the Garden?’ He said, ‘Although you have been concise in your question, yet it is of great importance and lengthy,[17] so then grasp what I tell you: worship Allah and do not associate anything as a partner with Him, and establish the obligatory prayer, and pay the obligatory *zakāh*, and fast Ramaḍān. The way in which you would like people to treat you, then treat them that way. That which you would dislike people bringing you, then beware of bringing it to them.’”

In another version from him also there is that he said, “Have *taqwā* of Allah. Do not associate anything with Him, and establish the prayer, pay the *zakāh*, perform the Ḥajj of the House, fast Ramaḍān, and [if]

you did not do more than that....”[18] It is said that this companion was [sent in] the deputation of Banī al-Muntafiq and that his name was Luqayṭ.

These actions are causes which require entrance to the Garden, and it may be that doing those things which are forbidden will prevent that, which is shown by that which Imam Aḥmad narrated from the hadith of ʿAmr ibn Murrah al-Juhanī, when he said, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, I witness that there is no god but Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah, I pray the five [prayers], pay the *zakāh* on my property, and fast the month of Ramaḍān.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Whoever dies in that [condition], will be with the prophets, the utterly truthful ones, and the *shuhadā*’ (martyrs) on the Day of Rising just like so,’ and he held up two [adjacent] fingers, ‘as long as he does not rebelliously disobey his parents.’”[19]

It has been narrated that entrance into the Garden is consequent to performance of some actions such as *ṣalāh*. In the well known hadith there is, “Whoever performs the prayers in their due times has a contract with Allah that He will make him enter the Garden.”[20] In the authentic hadith there is, “Whoever prays the

two coolest [prayers between dawn and sunrise, and between sunset and night] will enter the Garden."[21] All of this is in mention of the necessary causes [of entrance to the Garden] whose action is only done by gathering together their prerequisites and avoiding those things which invalidate them. What is narrated by Imam Aḥmad from Bashīr ibn al-Khasasiyah shows this. He said, "I came to the Prophet ﷺ to pledge allegiance to him, and he placed as conditions on me the witnessing that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger, and that I establish the prayer, pay *zakāh*, perform the [single obligatory] Ḥajj of Islam, fast Ramaḍān, and that I wage *jihād* in the way of Allah. I said, 'Messenger of Allah, as for two of them, I cannot do them: waging *jihād* and *ṣadaqah* (*zakāh*).' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ grasped his hand, then moved it and said, 'No *jihād* and no *ṣadaqah*! Then how will you enter the Garden?' I said, 'Messenger of Allah, I will pledge allegiance to you,' and I pledged allegiance to him on the basis of all of them [including *jihād* and *zakāh*]."[22] In this hadith there is that it is not enough to enter the Garden that one has these features without *zakāh* and *jihād*.

It is clearly established in authentic hadith that perpetrating some of the major wrong actions prevents one from entering the Garden, such as in his words, “A bandit will not enter the Garden.”[23] “Someone who has the weight of a tiny ant of arrogant pride in his heart will not enter the Garden,”[24] and in his words, “You will not enter the Garden until you have *īmān*, and you will not have *īmān* until you love each other.”[25] There are hadith related concerning the fact that one cannot enter the Garden having a debt until it is discharged. In the *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith there is that, “When the *mu’minūn* cross the *ṣirāṭ* [the narrow bridge over the Fire], they will be kept back on a bridge,[26] and reparation for mutual injustices that they perpetrated on each other in the world will be exacted from them.”[27]

One of the right-acting first generations said, “A man will be detained at the gate of the Garden for a hundred years for a wrong action he used to do in the world.” These are all matters that prevent [entrance into the Garden].

From this perspective it becomes clear what the meaning of the hadith are which are reported stating that entrance into the Garden is purely dependent on

tawḥīd. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Any slave who says, ‘There is no god but Allah’ and dies in that condition will enter the Garden.” I said, “Even if he commits adultery and steals?!” He said, “Even if he commits adultery and steals,” saying it three times, and on the fourth time adding, “In spite of Abū Dharr!” Abū Dharr narrated it and he would say, “In spite of Abū Dharr!”[28]

There is also in them from ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever witnesses that there is no god but Allah alone without partner, and that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger, and that ʿĪsā is the slave of Allah and His messenger and His word which He cast to Maryam and a *rūḥ* from Him, and that the Garden is true, and the Fire is true, then Allah will make him enter the Garden with whatever action there is.”[29]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah or Abū Saʿīd – there is some doubt about that – that the Prophet ﷺ said, “I witness that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah. No slave who meets Allah with the two of them,[30] without

doubting them, will be prevented from [entering] the Garden."[31]

There is also in it from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said to him one day, "Whoever you meet who witnesses that there is no god but Allah with certainty of that in his heart, then give him the good news of the Garden."[32] There are many hadith in this same sense.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said to Muʿādh one day, "Any slave who witnesses that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger, Allah will forbid him to [enter] the Fire."[33]

There is in both of them from ʿItbān ibn Mālik that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has forbidden to the Fire whoever says, 'There is no god but Allah,' seeking by it the face of Allah."[34]

A group of the people of knowledge said, "The phrase of *tawḥīd* is a cause which requires entrance into the Garden and deliverance from the Fire, but it has conditions, which is that one performs the obligatory actions, and it has things which prevent it which is doing the major wrong actions." Al-Ḥasan said to Farazdaq, "'There is no god but Allah' has

conditions, so beware of slandering a chaste woman." It has also been related of him that he said, "This is the central post, but where is the tent-rope?" meaning that the phrase of *tawḥīd* is the central post of the tent, but the tent cannot stand straight without its tent-ropes, which are the performance of the obligations and the avoidance and abandonment of the forbidden things.

Someone said to al-Ḥasan, "People say that whoever says there is no god but Allah will enter the Garden." He said, "Whoever says there is no god but Allah and fulfils its dues and its obligations will enter the Garden."

Someone asked Wahb ibn Munabbih, "Is 'There is no god but Allah' not the key of the Garden?" He said, "Of course. But every key has teeth. If you use a key which has teeth, then it will open for you, but if you use a key without teeth, it will not open for you."[35]

Something similar is narrated of Ibn ʿUmar that when he was asked about whether any deed can do one harm along with, "There is no god but Allah," just as no deed is of any use along with abandoning it? Ibn ʿUmar said, "Live! and do not be deceived!"[36]

A group said – among whom were aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and az-Zuhrī – that this was before the obligations and the *ḥadd* punishments were revealed, and some of them indicated that it was abrogated, and others said that some conditions were added to it. There is a famous difference among people who study the *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of *fiqh*) as to whether the addition of some conditions is abrogation or not. On all of this there are different views, because many of these hadith happened long after the obligations and *ḥadd* punishments [were revealed].

Ath-Thawrī said, "The obligations and *ḥadd* punishments abrogate it," and it is possible that he meant the same as these others, but it is possible that it must be interpreted that he meant the obligating of the obligatory acts and of the *ḥadd* punishments makes clear that worldly punishment [for leaving out the obligations or for doing acts which require *ḥadd* punishments] is not lifted merely because of the two *shahādahs*, and that the punishment of the next life is similar in that respect. With a similar explanation and in order to remove self-deception the right-acting first generations used to say that it was abrogated, whereas

it is not abrogation in the well-known technical sense of the term.

A group said that these unqualified texts are actually to be qualified by the person saying it [the *shahādah*], "truthfully and sincerely," and that truthfulness and sincerity would prevent anyone persisting in acts of disobedience along with it [the *shahādah*].

There is in one of the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says, 'There is no god but Allah,' with pure sincerity, will enter the Garden." Someone asked, "What is its pure sincerity?" He said, "That it should hold you back from what Allah has forbidden."[37] That is narrated with chains of transmission in many different ways which are weak.

It is most likely that al-Ḥasan indicated this with his words which we related above, because the heart's realisation of the meaning of "There is no god but Allah" and its truthfulness and sincerity concerning it necessarily requires that devotion to Allah alone is firmly established in it, exalting His majesty out of awe, in fear, love, hope, exaltation and true reliance [on Him] and that it should be full of that, and void of devotion to any other created beings than Him. When

it is like that then no love nor will, nor seeking remains for anything other than that which Allah wills, loves and seeks. By that, all the whims and desires of the self and its will are nullified from out of the heart, and also the whisperings of *shayṭān*, since whoever loves something and obeys it, and loves for its sake and hates for its sake, then it is his god. Whoever only loves and hates for the sake of Allah, and only makes friends and enemies for His sake, then Allah is truly his god. Whoever loves and hates for the sake of his own whims and desires, forms friendships and enmities for its sake, then his whims and desires are his god, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ

"Have you seen him who takes his whims and desires to be his god?"[38] AlḤasan said, "That is the one who does not love something without pursuing it." Qatādah said, "He is the one who whenever he loves something he pursues it, and whenever he has an appetite for something he does it, neither *taqwā* nor scrupulousness prevent him." It has been narrated in a *marfūᶜ* hadith from Abū Umāmah, "There is no god

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underneath the sky whose worship is more grave to Allah than that of a whim and a desire which is followed."[39]

Similarly, whoever obeys *shayṭān* and disobeys Allah worships him [*shayṭān*], as Allah ﷻ says:

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

"Did I not make a contract with you, tribe of Ādam, not to worship Shayṭān, who truly is an outright enemy to you."[40]

By this it is clear that it is only authentic to claim the realisation of the meaning of "There is no god but Allah" for someone in whose heart there is no persistence in love for that which Allah dislikes, nor is there any willing of that which Allah does not will. Whenever there is any of that in the heart, that is a defect in *tawḥīd*, and it is a type of hidden association of partners (*shirk*) with Allah. It is for that reason that Mujāhid spoke about His words, exalted is He:

أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

“that you do not associate anything with Me,”[41] and said, “that you do not love other than Me.”

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥākim* from ʿĀ’ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Associating partners with Allah is more hidden than the creeping of an ant on a stone on a dark night, and the least of it is that you love [someone] despite any act of injustice and hate [someone] despite any act of justice. Is the *dīn* anything but love and hate? Allah ﷻ says:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

‘Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you.’[42]”[43] This is a clear statement that love of what Allah dislikes and hatred of what He loves is an act of following one’s own whims and desires, and that making friends and enemies on that basis is a type of hidden association of partners with Allah.

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas, ““There is no god but Allah’ continues to protect the slaves from the displeasure of Allah as long as they do not prefer their worldly affairs over the contract of their *dīn*. When they prefer the contract of their world over their *dīn* and then they say, ‘There is no god but

Allah,' it is rejected and returned to them, and Allah says, 'You lie!'"[44]

This makes clear the meaning of his words ﷺ, "Whoever witnesses truly that there is no god but Allah from his heart, Allah will forbid him to the Fire," and that whoever of this phrase enters the Fire it is because of the paucity of truthfulness in his saying it, because when this phrase is said truthfully, it cleanses everything other than Allah from the heart. Whoever is truthful in his saying, "There is no god but Allah," does not love anything other than Him, and only hopes for Him, fears no one but Allah, and only relies on Allah, and nothing remains of the traces of his own self and his whims and desires. Whenever there remains any trace of other than Allah in the heart, it is because of the paucity of truthfulness in his saying it.

The Fire of Jahannam is extinguished by the *īmān* of the people of *tawḥīd*, as is in the famous hadith, "The Fire says to the *mu'min*, 'Pass on *mu'min*! for your light has extinguished my flames.'"[45]

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There will not remain a good or wicked person who will not enter it. However, it will be cool and safe for the *mu'minūn* just as it was

for Ibrāhīm, so much so that the Fire will raise a tumult from their coolness."[46]

This is an inheritance which the *mu'minūn* inherit from the state of Ibrāhīm ﷺ because the Fire of Jahannam is afraid of the fire of love in the *mu'minūn's* hearts. Al-Junayd said, "The Fire said, 'O my Lord! if I did not obey You, would You punish me with anything stronger than Me?' He said, 'Yes. I would give My greatest fire authority over you.' It said, 'Is there a fire greater and stronger than me?' He said, 'Yes. The fire of love of Me which I make reside in the hearts of my awliyā', the *mu'minūn*.'" With respect to this someone said:

In the heart of the lover is the fire of a desire
The hottest fires of Jaḥīm are its coolest.

The hadith of Muʿādh bears witness to this sense, for in it the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever's last words are, 'There is no god but Allah,' will enter the Garden,"[47] because the person on the deathbed cannot say it without sincerity and without turning to Allah in *tawbah*, regret for what is past, and resolve never to return to the like of it. Al-Khaṭṭābī regarded this

saying as the weightiest in a compilation of his dedicated to *tawḥīd*, and it is good.

1 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 121

2 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (1883)

3 The translation is based on the Warsh Madinan *riwāyah* of the Qur'ān,. In the Ḥafṣ Kufan *riwāyah* it is "by which the *kuffār* are led astray." Trans.

4 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 37

5 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 88-89

6 *Shirk*, magic, murder, usury, consuming the property of an orphan, fleeing from the enemy in battle, slandering chaste women. Trans.

7 Sūrat an-Nisā': 31

8 An-Nasā'ī (5:8), Ibn Khuzaymah (315), al-Ḥākim and Ibn Ḥibbān.

9 An-Nasā'ī (7:88) and Aḥmad (5:413)

10 Aḥmad (1:250)

11 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (8151)

12 Al-Bukhārī (1332)

13 Muslim (13)

14 Al-Bukhārī (1397), Muslim (14)

15 Al-Bukhārī (46), Muslim (11)

16 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7535)

17 i.e. despite the concise question, the matter is a lengthy one. Ed

18 Aḥmad (6:383, 384)

19 Ibn Ḥibbān (3438)

20 Abū Dāwūd (465), an-Nasā'ī (1:230), Ibn Mājah (1401) and others

21 Al-Bukhārī (574) and Muslim (635)

22 Aḥmad (5:224)

23 Al-Bukhārī (5984), Muslim (2556) and others

24 Muslim (91) and others

25 The rest of the hadith is, "should I not show you something that if you do it you will love each other, spread *salām* among you." Narrated by Muslim (54) and others. Ed

26 *Qanṭarah* "bridge". "They differ about the *qanṭarah* mentioned and some said that it is the final part of the *ṣirāṭ* and and it is the end that is next to the Garden, and some said that they are two different *ṣirāṭs*." Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*.

27 Al-Bukhārī (2440)

28 Al-Bukhārī (5489), Muslim (94)

29 Al-Bukhārī (3252), Muslim (28)

30 The two *shahādahs*. Ed.

31 Muslim (27)

32 Muslim (31)

33 Al-Bukhārī (128), Muslim (32)

34 Al-Bukhārī (425), Muslim (33)

35 Al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the chapter of *Janā'iz* (funeral rites). Ed

36 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:311)

37 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (15074)

38 Sūrat al-Jāthiyah: 22

39 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7502)

40 Sūrah Yā Sīn: 60

41 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 151

42 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 31

43 Al-Ḥākim (2:291)

44 Al-Bazzār (3619)

45 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (9:329), aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (22:668)

46 Aḥmad (3:328-9), al-Ḥākim (4:587)

47 Abū Dāwūd (3116), Aḥmad (5:233) and al-Ḥākim (1:351)

الحديث الثالث والعشرون

عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿ الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الإِيمَانِ ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُ الْمِيزَانَ، وَ﴿ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ ﴾ ، وَ﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ﴾ تَمْلَآنِ ـــ أَوْ تَمْلَأُ ـــ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ، وَالصَّلاةُ نُورٌ ، وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ ، وَالصَّبْرُ ضِيَاءٌ ، وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ، كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَغْدُو ، فَبَايِعٌ نَفْسَهُ، فَمُعْتِقُهَا ، أَوْ مُوبِقُهَا ﴾ . رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Purity is Half of *Īmān*

Abū Mālik al-Ḥārith ibn ʿĀṣim al-Ashʿarī ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Purity[1] is half (shaṭr) of *īmān*. *Al-ḥamdu lillāh* fills the scales. *Subḥāna'llāh* – glory be to Allah – *wa'l-ḥamdu lillāh* – and praise belongs to Allah – both fill – or fills – whatever is between heaven and earth. And prayer is a light. *Ṣadaqah* is a proof. Patience is a radiant light, and the Qur'ān is an argument for or against you. Everybody goes out in the morning and sells his self; then he either frees it from slavery or destroys it." Muslim (223) narrated it.

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr saying that Zayd ibn Sallām told him that Abū Sallām told him that Abū Mālik alAshʿarī said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Purity is half of *īmān*, *al-ḥamdu lillāh* fills the scales,’” mentioning the rest of the hadith, and in most copies of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is, “And steadfastness is a radiant light,” and in some of them, “And fasting is a radiant light.”

There is a difference of opinion about whether Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr heard directly from Zayd ibn Sallām. Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn denied it, but Imam Aḥmad confirmed it, and in this narration it is clearly declared that he heard directly from him.

An-Nasā’ī and Ibn Mājah narrated this hadith[2] from a version of Muʿāwiyah ibn Sallām from his brother Zayd ibn Sallām from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam from Abū Mālik, and the extra part of his chain of transmission is ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam. One of the memorisers of hadith regard this version as weightier and he said, “Muʿāwiyah ibn Sallām knew his brother Zayd’s hadith better than did Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr. Something that strengthens that [supposition] is that it has been narrated from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam from Abū Mālik in other ways,

so that then the version of Muslim is disconnected [lacking the direct hearing of Yaḥyā from Zayd].

There are some differences between the hadith of Muʿāwiyah and that of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr, because the wording of the hadith according to Ibn Mājah is, “Completing the *wuḍū*’ thoroughly is half of *īmān*, and al-ḥamdu lillāh fills the scales. Glorification (tasbīḥ) and magnification (*takbīr*) fill the heaven and the earth. Prayer is a light, and *zakāh* a proof. Patient steadfastness is a radiant light, and the Qur’ān is a proof for you or against you. Everybody goes out in the morning and sells his self, then he either frees it from slavery or destroys it.”

At-Tirmidhī narrated the hadith of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr which Muslim narrated, and the wording of his hadith is, “*Wuḍū*’ is a half of *īmān*,”and the remainder of his hadith is like the general drift of Muslim’s.

Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated the hadith of a man from Banī Sulaym who said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ counted them out on my hand or on his hand, “Glorification (tasbīḥ) is a half of the scales, and al-ḥamdu lillāh fills it. Magnification (*takbīr*) fills what is between the heaven and the earth. Fasting is a half of steadfastness, and purity is a half of *īmān*.”[3]

By his saying ﷺ, “Purity is half of *īmān*,” the word ‘purity’ is explained by one person as meaning abandoning wrong actions, as in His words, exalted is He:

إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ

“They are people who keep themselves pure!”[4] and in His words:

وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ

“Purify your clothes!”[5] and His words:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“Allah loves those who turn back from wrongdoing and He loves those who purify themselves.”[6]

The same person said, “There are two types of *īmān*: doing and renunciation. Half of it is doing those things which one is commanded to do, and the other half is renouncing those things which one has been forbidden to do, and that is purification of the self by giving up acts of disobedience.” This saying is one to

be considered as a possible interpretation if it were not for the version, "*Wuḍū*' is half of *īmān*," which contradicts it, and similarly the version, "Completing *wuḍū*' thoroughly is half of *īmān*."

Also there is reason to have other views about it from the point of view of the meaning, since many actions, such as *ṣalāh*, purify the self of previous wrong actions so why does it not come under the term 'purity'? When actions or some of them are considered to be comprised under the term 'purity', the fact of giving up wrong actions cannot be convincingly demonstrated to be a half of *īmān*.

The authentic position upon which most people are agreed is that what is meant by 'purity' here is purification by means of water from occurrences [which void *wuḍū*' or *ghusl*]. It is for that reason that Muslim begins his chapter on *wuḍū*' by narrating it, as did an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah and others. Once this is established, then people differ about the meaning of purification with water being a half of *īmān*.

Some say that what is meant by 'shaṭr – a half' is 'a portion' not a half specifically, so that purity is a part of *īmān*, but there is weakness in this because the only linguistic use of shaṭr known is 'a half', and because in

the hadith of the man from Banī Sulaym there is that, "Purity is a half (*niṣf*) of *īmān*," as we saw previously.

Some say that the meaning is that the reward for *wuḍū'* is multiplied until it reaches one half of *īmān*, but without multiplication, but there are critical views about this.

Some say that *īmān* atones for all major wrong actions, but *wuḍū'* atones for minor wrong actions, and that it is a half of *īmān* by this understanding. This is refuted by the hadith, "Whoever does evil in Islam will be taken to task for what he did in the age of ignorance," which we mentioned previously.

Some say that *wuḍū'* atones for wrong actions [if] accompanied by *īmān*, so that thus it becomes a half of *īmān*, but this is also weak.

Some say that what is meant by *īmān* here is *ṣalāh*, as it is used in His words ﷻ:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

"Allah would never let your *īmān* go to waste,"[7] in which what is meant [by *īmān*] is 'your *ṣalāh* towards *al-bayt al-maqdis* [in Jerusalem]'. Then if what is meant by *īmān* is the *ṣalāh*, *ṣalāh* is not acceptable

without purity and thus purity becomes one half of *ṣalāh* according to this understanding. Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī narrated this explanation in *Kitāb aṣ-ṣalāh* from Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh from Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, and that he said about their saying, "[To say] 'I do not know' is one half of knowledge" that knowledge is either "I know" or "I do not know" so that each of them is the other's half.

I say that everything which is comprised of two categories, then each one of them is the other's half, whether the numbers of each category are equal, or one is more numerous than the other. The hadith which shows this is, "I have divided the *ṣalāh* between Me and My slave in two halves,"[8] meaning the recitation in the *ṣalāh*, and thus He explains it as the Fātiḥah. What is meant is that it is divided into worship and supplication. Worship is the right of the Lord, and supplication is the right of the slave. It does not mean that the words are equally divided in two. Al-Khaṭṭābī mentioned this and he derived an evidence from the saying of the Arabs, "A half of the year is travel and the other half is residence." He said, "That doesn't imply that the two times are equal, but that the two times are apportioned to them [travel and

residence] even if the two times are not equal." [He also derived an evidence from] the words of Shurayḥ when someone asked him, "How are you this morning?" He said, "This morning, [I find] half of the people angry at me," meaning that people are either those who would give judgement in his favour or against him, and that those who would give judgement against him are angry with him and those who would give judgement in his favour are contented with him, and thus they are two different groups. The poet says:

> When I die, people will be in two halves:
> Those who abuse my death
> and those who praise what I used to do.
> Meaning that they will divide into two
> groups.

I say that from this same sense there is the *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Hurayrah on [the sciences of] inheritances that, "they are a half of knowledge" which Ibn Mājah narrated,[9] since there are two categories of judgements for those obligated: those concerning life and those concerning what happens after death, and this latter is the laws of inheritance. Ibn Masʿūd said, "The laws of inheritance are a third

of [all] knowledge." The reason for that is the *marfūʿ* hadith which Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah narrated from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr, "Knowledge is threefold and anything over and above that is surplus: a clear *āyah* of judgement or an established Sunnah or a just division of inheritance."[10]

It is narrated that Mujāhid said, "Rinsing the mouth and snuffing water are a half of wuḍū'."[11] What he probably meant is that there are two categories within *wuḍū'*, one of which is mentioned in the Qur'ān and the other of which is derived from the Sunnah which is rinsing the mouth and snuffing water. Or he may have meant that rinsing the mouth and snuffing water purify the inward of the body and washing the rest of the limbs purifies its outward, so that they are two halves according to this understanding. Of that there is also the saying of Ibn Masʿūd, "Steadfastness is a half of *īmān*, and certainty is all of *īmān*."[12] It is narrated in a version of Yazīd ar-Raqāshī from Anas as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "*Īmān* has two halves: a half is comprised of steadfastness (*ṣabr*) and a half of gratitude (*shukr*)."[13] Since *īmān* comprises the performance of the obligations and the renunication of those things which are forbidden, none of which can

be obtained without steadfastness, then patience is a half of *īmān*. Similarly it is thus said about *wuḍū*' that it is a half of the *ṣalāh*.

Also, the *ṣalāh* expunges wrong actions and errors provided that *wuḍū*' is done completely and excellently, and thus in this understanding it also comprises a half of the *ṣalāh*, as is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿUthmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any Muslim who purifies himself and completes the purification which is obligatory for him, then prays these five prayers, they [the prayers] will expunge what [occurs] between them [of wrong actions]." In another narration of his there is, "Whoever completes the *wuḍū*' as Allah commands him, then the obligatory prayers are expiations for what [occurs] between them."

Also, the *ṣalāh* is the key of the Garden, and *wuḍū*' is the key of the *ṣalāh*, as Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated in the *marfūʿ* hadith of Jābir, and both the prayer and *wuḍū*' are a cause for opening the gates of the Garden, as is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "Any Muslim who performs *wuḍū*', and does his *wuḍū*' excellently well, and then stands and prays two *rakʿahs*

undertaking them with his heart and his face, then the Garden is obliged for him."[14] There is from ʿUqbah from ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any of you who performs *wuḍū*' to the fullest or completely and then says, 'I witness that there is no god but Allah and I witness that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger,' will have the eight gates of the Garden opened up him and he may enter through whichever of them he wishes."[15]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿUbādah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says, 'I witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner, and that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger, and that ʿĪsā is the slave of Allah, the son of His female slave, His word which He cast unto Maryam and a *rūḥ* from Him, and that the Garden is true, and that the Fire is true,' Allah will make him enter any of the eight gates of the Garden which he wishes."

Since *wuḍū*' along with the two *shahādahs* is something that makes the opening of the gates of the Garden necessary, then *wuḍū*' becomes a half of *īmān* in Allah and His Messenger by this understanding.

Also, *wuḍū*' is one of the hidden characteristics of *īmān* which only the *mu'min* safeguards, as is in the

hadith of Thawbān and others from the Prophet ﷺ, "Only the *mu'min* safeguards wuḍū'." Performing *ghusl* because of *janābah*[16] has been narrated to be fulfilment of the trust (*amānah*), as al-ʿUqaylī narrated it in the hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "[There are] five such that whoever brings them along with īmān will enter the Garden: whoever safeguards the five prayers with their *wuḍū'*, their bowings, their prostrations and in their times, and he gives the *zakāh* of his wealth contentedly," and he [Abū'd-Dardā'] said, "and he used to say, 'And I swear by Allah! only a *mu'min* does that,'" ..."and he fasts Ramaḍān, performs the Ḥajj of the House, whoever is able to take a way to it, and he fulfils the *amānah* [trust]." They asked, "Abū'd-Dardā', what is the *amānah*?" He said, "Performing *ghusl* because of *janābah*, because Allah did not entrust anything of his *dīn* to the son of Ādam without it."[17]

Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Abū Ayyūb that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The five prayers, and the Jumuʿah up until the [next] Jumuʿah, and fulfilling the trust, are atonements for that which occurs between them." Someone asked, "What is the fulfilment of the trust?" He replied, "Performing *ghusl* because of *janābah*,

because the state of *janābah* is under every single hair."[18] The previous hadith from Abū'd-Dardā' shows that *wuḍū'* is one part of the prayer.

It has been narrated in another hadith which al-Bazzār narrated in a version of Shabābah ibn Siwār, "Al-Mughīrah ibn Muslim told us from al-Aʿmash from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, that, 'The prayer is three thirds: purity is a third, bowing is a third, and prostration is a third. Whoever discharges it as is its due, it will be accepted from him, and all his other deeds will be accepted from him. Whoever's prayer is rejected, will have all his other deeds rejected.'"[19] He said, "Al-Mughīrah alone transmitted it, and what is recorded is that it is from Abū Ṣāliḥ from the words of Kaʿb."

According to this categorisation, *wuḍū'* is a third of the prayer, unless one regards the bowing and prostration as a single matter because of their close similarity to each other in form, so that then *wuḍū'* would also be half of the prayer.

It is also a possible interpretation to say that all the features of *īmān*, both deeds and words, purify the heart and make it grow. As for purification with water it is particularly with respect to purification of the

body and its cleanliness. Thus there are two categories of the attributes of *īmān*, one of which is the purification of the outward, and the other the purification of the inward, so that they are two halves by this understanding. And Allah knows best what He means and what His Messenger meant by all of this.

With respect to his saying ﷺ, "*Al-ḥamdu lillāh* fills the scales, Subḥāna'llāh w'al-ḥamdu lillāh both fill – or fills – whatever is between heaven and earth," the narrator had some doubt about the wording. In the version of an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah there is, "Glorification (tasbīḥ) and magnification (*takbīr*) fill the heaven and the earth." In the hadith of the man from Banī Sulaym there is, "Glorification (tasbīḥ) is a half of the scales, and praise (al-ḥamdu lillāh) fills it. Magnification (*takbīr*) fills what is between the heaven and the earth."

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith from al-Ifrīqī from ʿAbdullāh ibn Yazīd from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Tasbīḥ is a half of the scales, and *al-ḥamdu lillāh* fills it. 'There is no god but Allah' has nothing to keep it from Allah until it reaches Him."[20] He said, "Its chain of transmission is not strong." I say that there is disagreement about his chain of

transmission from al-Ifrīqī, and it has been narrated from him from Abū ʿAlqamah from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ and in it there is in addition, “And ‘Allah is greater’ fills the heavens and the earth.”

Jaʿfar al-Firyābī narrated in his book *adh-Dhikr*, and others also narrated, the hadith of ʿAlī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Al-ḥamdu lillāh fills the scales and Subḥāna’llāh is a half of the scales, and *lā ilāha illa’llāh* and *Allāhu akbar* fill the heavens and the earth and what is in between them.”[21]

Al-Firyābī also narrated the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that the Prophet ﷺ said, “[There are] two phrases, one of which, for whoever says it, there is none below the Throne to prevent it, and the other fills whatever is between heaven and earth: *lā ilāha illa’llāh* and *Allāhu akbar*.”[22]

These hadith comprise the virtue of these four phrases, which are the best of speech, and they are: *Subḥāna’llāh* – Glory be to Allah, al-ḥamdu lillāh – praise belongs to Allah, *lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god except Allah – and *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater.

As for praise, al-ḥamdu lillāh, all of the hadith agree that it fills the scales. Some say that it is struck as a metaphor and that the meaning is that if praise

were a physical body it would fill the scales. Some say that, on the contrary, Allah ﷻ will represent the actions of the descendants of Ādam and their words as forms which will be seen on the Day of Rising and which will be weighed, as the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Qur’ān will come on the Day of Rising preceded by al-Baqarah and Āl ʿImrān as if they were two clouds or two shades or two flocks of birds in ranks.”[23]

He said, “[There are] two phrases which are beloved to the All-Merciful, heavy in the scales and light on the tongue: *Subḥāna’llāh* wa biḥamdihi, *Subḥana’llāhi’l-ʿaẓīm* – Glory be to Allah by His praise, Glory be to Allah the Great.”[24]

He said, “The heaviest thing to be placed in the scales is good character.”[25] Similarly, the *mu’min’s* right action will come to him in his grave in the most beautiful form, whereas the *kāfir’s* deeds will come to him in the ugliest form.[26] It is narrated that the prayer, *zakāh*, fasting and good actions will be around the dead person in his grave defending him, and that the Qur’ān will ascend and intercede for him.[27]

As for Subḥāna’llāh – Glory be to Allah – there is in the narration of Muslim, “Subḥāna’llāh – glory be to Allah – and al-ḥamdu lillāh – praise belongs to Allah –

both fill – or fills – whatever is between heaven and earth," the narrator was in doubt as to what it is that fills between heaven and earth, whether it is the two phrases or one of them. In the version of an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah it is, "Glorification (tasbīḥ) and magnification (*takbīr*) fill heaven and earth," and this version is more suitable. There is a question as to whether what is meant is that both together fill what is between heaven and earth, or each one independently fills that. In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah and the other man there is that the *takbīr* alone fills what is between heaven and earth.

In any case, tasbīḥ stands in a lower rank with respect to virtue as is clearly narrated in the hadith of ʿAlī, Abū Hurayrah, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr and the man from Banī Sulaym, that tasbīḥ is a half of the scales and al-ḥamdu lillāh fills it. The reason for that is that praise is affirmation that all praises are for Allah, thus comprising affirmation of all the attributes of perfection and majesty, whereas tasbīḥ is purification of Allah from all shortcomings, defects and flaws, so affirmation is more complete and perfect than negation. It is for that reason that tasbīḥ is not mentioned on its own, but rather coupled with that

which indicates affirmation of [Allah's] perfection. Sometimes it is coupled with praise as in the saying, "Subḥāna'llāh *wa biḥamdihi* – Glory be to Allah by His praise," and "Subḥāna'llāh – glory be to Allah – and alḥamdu lillāh – praise belongs to Allah," and sometimes it is coupled with one of the names which indicate greatness and majesty such as in his words, "*Subḥana'llāhi'l-ʿaẓīm* – Glory be to Allah, the Great." If the hadith of Abū Mālik shows that that which fills what is between heaven and earth is tasbīḥ and *takbīr* together, then the matter is clear. If what is meant is that each of the two fills that, then the scales are vaster than that which is between heaven and earth, and that which fills the scales is vaster than that which fills heaven and earth, which is also indicated by the *ṣaḥīḥ* transmission that Salmān ﷺ said, "The scales will be placed on the Day of Rising, and even if the heavens and the earth were to be weighed in them it would be sufficient. The angels will ask, 'Lord! for whom will You weigh this?' Allah, exalted is He, will say, 'Whomever I wish of My creatures.' The angels will say, 'Glory be to You! we have not worshipped You as You ought to be worshipped!'" Al-Ḥākim narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith and said that it is ṣaḥīḥ,

but that it is a *mawqūf* statement is more well-known.[28]

As for *takbīr*, in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah and the man from Banī Sulaym there is that it alone fills what is between the heavens and the earth. In the hadith of ʿAlī there is that *takbīr* along with *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – there is no god except Allah – fills the heavens and the earth and what is between them.

As for *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – there is no god except Allah – alone, it reaches Allah without any barrier between it and Him. At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If a slave says, '*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god except Allah' sincerely, the gates of heaven will be opened for him until it reaches the Throne, as long as he avoids the major wrong actions."[29]

Abū Umāmah said, "Any slave who repeats '*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – there is no god but Allah', then nothing short of the Throne holds it back." It has also been narrated that nothing equals it in weight in the scales, in the famous hadith of 'the scrap of paper'. Aḥmad, *at-Tirmidhī* and an-Nasā'ī narrated it, and in the end of it according to Imam Aḥmad there is, "and nothing is heavy with the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the

Compassionate."[30] There is in the *Musnad* from ʾʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When death came to Nūḥ ﷺ he said to his son, 'I order you with, "Lā ilāha illa'llāh – there is no god but Allah," because even if the seven heavens and the seven lands were placed in one pan [of the scales] and Lā ilāha illa'llāh was placed in the other pan, Lā ilāha illa'llāh would outweigh them."[31]

In it also there is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Mūsā ﷺ said, 'Lord, teach me something by which I can remember and supplicate You.' He said, 'Mūsā, say, "Lā ilāha illa'llāh."' He said, 'All of Your slaves say this. I want something specially from You for me.' He said, 'Mūsā, even if the seven heavens and their inhabitants apart from Me, and the seven lands were placed in one pan, and Lā ilāha illa'llāh in another pan, Lā ilāha illa'llāh would tip [the scales] against them.'"[32]

There are different views as to which of the two phrases is better, the phrase of praise or the phrase of Lā ilāha illa'llāh. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and others narrated this divergence. An-Nakhaʿī said, "They used to think that *ḥamd* is the speech [whose reward] is most

multiplied." Ath-Thawrī said, "Nothing of speech is multiplied [in reward] as much as al-ḥamdu lillāh."

Al-hamd comprises affirmation of all the types of Allah's perfections, so that *tawḥīd* is included in it. There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from Abū Saʿīd and Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah singled four things out from speech: Subḥāna'llāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, Lā ilāha illa'llāh and *Allāhu akbar*. Whoever says Subḥāna'llāh will have twenty good deeds recorded for him, or twenty wrong actions will be removed [from his record]. Whoever says *Allāhu akbar* has the like of that. Whoever says Lā ilāha illa'llāh has the like of that. Whoever says al-hamdu lillahi rabbi'l-'alamin – praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds – from himself will have thirty good deeds recorded for him or thirty wrong actions removed [from his record]."[33] This has also been narrated of Kaʿb as his own words, and some say that this is more authentic than ascribing it [to the Prophet ﷺ].

About his saying ﷺ, "The prayer is a light, *ṣadaqah* a proof and steadfastness a radiant light," and in some of the editions of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, "And fasting is a radiant light," then these are three types of actions all of which are lights, but some of which are singled out

for different types of light. The prayer is unqualified light, and it has been narrated with two chains of transmission, about both of which there is some discussion, from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The prayer is the light of the *mu’min*.”[34] In the world it is a light for the *mu’minūn* in their hearts and inner sights, by which their hearts become bright and the light of the inner sight appears, and so for this reason it [the prayer] is the refreshment of the eyes of the people of *taqwā*, as the Prophet ﷺ used to say, “The refreshment of my eyes has been placed in the prayer.” Aḥmad[35] and an-Nasā’ī narrated it.

In another version there is, “The hungry man becomes satiated, the thirsty man’s thirst is slaked, but I do not become satiated with love of the prayer.”[36] In the *Musnad* there is that Ibn ʿAbbās said, “Jibrīl said to the Prophet ﷺ ‘Allah has made the prayer beloved to you, so take what you want of it.’”[37] Abū Dāwūd narrated the hadith of a man from Khuzāʿah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Bilāl, call the *iqāmah* [to establish] the prayer and gave us rest by it.”[38]

Mālik ibn Dīnār said, “I read in the Tawrah: ‘Son of Ādam! do not be incapable of standing in front of Me in your prayer weeping, because I am the One Who

draws near to your heart, and in the unseen you see My light,'"[39] referring to the tenderheartedness and weeping that are opened up to the one who prays.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, "When the slave safeguards his prayer, establishes its *wuḍūʾ*, its bowing, prostration and the recitation in it, it says to him, 'May Allah preserve you as you have preserved me.' It will be raised to heaven with a light until it finally reaches Allah ﷻ and it will intercede for the one who prayed it."[40]

It will be a light for the *muʾminūn* in their graves, particularly the prayer at night as Abū'd-Dardā' said, "Pray two *rakʿahs* in the darknesses of the night for the darkness of the graves."

Rābiʿah missed her wird[41] at night for a period, and someone came in her sleep and recited to her:

> Your prayer is a light, while the slaves are asleep,
> And your sleep is the obstinate opposite of prayer.

In the next life, it is a light for the *muʾminūn* on the [Day of] Rising, and on the ṣirāṭ [the bridge over the Fire to the Garden], because the lights are apportioned

to them according to their actions. There is in the *Musnad* and in the *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ mentioned the prayer and said, "Whoever safeguards it, it will be a light, a proof and a salvation for him on the Day of Rising. Whoever does not safeguard it, it will not be a light, nor salvation nor a proof for him."[42]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated, with a chain of transmission about which there are different views, a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās and Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever prays the five prayers in community (*jamāʿah*), will cross the Ṣirāṭ like a flash of lightning in the first group of the Forerunners. He will come on the Day of Rising with his face like the moon on the night of the full moon."[43]

As for *ṣadaqah*, it is a proof (*burhān*). *Burhān* is the rays of light which are close to the face of the sun, as for example in the hadith of Abū Mūsā, that the *rūḥ* of the *mu'min* will come out of his body [at death] having rays of light like the sun's rays of light. From that, a categoric proof is called a *burhān* because of the clarity of its showing that which it shows. Similarly, *ṣadaqah* is a *burhān* – proof – of the authenticity of [a person's] *īmān*. The person's contentment with it is a sign of his

experiencing the sweetness and savour of *īmān*, as is narrated in the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Muʿāwiyah al-Ghāḍirī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "[There are] three [things] which whoever does them has tasted the savour of *īmān*: whoever worships Allah alone, and that there is no god but Allah, pays the *zakāh* of his wealth, whilst his self is pleased with it and supports him to do it every year..." and he mentioned the rest of the hadith. Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[44]

We have just recently mentioned the hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' concerning someone who pays the *zakāh* of his wealth contented to do so in himself, and he said, "He used to say, 'No one does that but a *mu'min*.'" The reason for that is that people love wealth and are mean with it, and when they liberally and generously give it away for the sake of Allah ﷻ it shows the authenticity of their *īmān* in Allah and in His promise and threat. For this reason the Arabs refused to pay the *zakāh* after the Prophet ﷺ and aṣ-Ṣiddīq ؓ fought them because of their refusal. The prayer also is a proof of the authenticity of [a person's] Islam.

Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated a hadith of Kaʿb ibn 'Ujrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The prayer is

a proof."[45]

We mentioned in the commentary of the hadith, "I have been commanded to fight people until they witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah, and they establish the prayer and pay the *zakāh*," that the prayer is the distinguishing factor between *kufr* and Islam. It is also the first thing for which a man will be taken to account on the Day of Rising. If someone's prayer is complete, then he has succeeded and is saved. We have previously seen the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr concerning whoever safeguards it, that it will be a light, a proof and salvation for him on the Day of Rising.

As for steadfastness, it is a radiant light (*ḍiyā'*), which is the light which has some degree of heat and burning in it like the radiant light of the sun, as opposed to the moon, because it [the moon] is pure light in which there is illumination without any burning. Allah ﷻ says:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا

“It is He who appointed the sun to give radiance, and the moon to give light.”[46] It is from this point of view that Allah describes the *Sharīʿah* of Mūsā as being radiant (shining), as He says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

“We gave to Mūsā and Hārūn the Discrimination and a Shining Light and a Reminder for those with *taqwā*,”[47] even if He also mentions that there is light (*nūr*) in the Tawrah, as He says:

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التَّوْرَاةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ

“We sent down the Torah containing guidance and light,”[48] however what is the predominant element in their *Sharīʿah* is radiant light because of the heavy and burdensome commands, difficult tasks and fatiguing works, and weighty burdens in it.

He describes the *Sharīʿah* of Muḥammad ﷺ as being a light because of the liberally generous *ḥanifiyyah* [the ancient way of Ibrāhīm] that is in it. He says, exalted is He:

قَدْ جَاءَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ

"A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book."[49] He says:

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوباً عِندَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَآئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالأَغْلاَلَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُواْ النُّورَ الَّذِيَ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

"Those who follow the Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Injil, commanding them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong, making good things *ḥalāl* for them and bad things *ḥarām* for them, relieving them of their heavy loads and the chains which were around them. Those who have *īmān* in him and honour him and help him, and follow the Light that has been sent down with him, they are the ones who are successful."[50]

Since steadfastness is difficult for people and requires struggle with the self and restraining it, and

holding it back from what it desires, it is a type of radiant light, because the meaning of *ṣabr* linguistically is restraint, an example of which is *qatl aṣ-ṣabr* – the killing by restraining (*ṣabr*) – which is that a man should be forcibly restrained until he is killed [the person who restrains him being as much a murderer as the one who does the act].

There are a number of praiseworthy types of steadfastness, of which there is steadfastness in obedience to Allah ﷻ steadfastness in not disobeying Allah ﷻ and steadfastness at the decrees of Allah ﷻ. Being patiently steadfast in acts of obedience and in not doing acts of disobedience is superior to being patiently steadfast under painful decrees. The right-acting first generations, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, Maymūn ibn Mihrān and others, were explicit about that. It has been narrated with a weak chain of transmission in a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿAlī, "By steadfastness under an affliction that occurs the slave has three hundred ranks written for him, but by being patiently steadfast in obedience six hundred ranks are recorded for him, and by steadfastness in not disobeying nine hundred ranks are recorded." Ibn Abī'd-Dunyā and Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated it.[51]

One of the best types of steadfastness is fasting, for it unites the three types of steadfastness because it is steadfastness in obedience to Allah ﷻ, and steadfastness in not disobeying Allah since the slave abandons his appetites for the sake of Allah ﷻ while his self struggles to draw him towards them. Thus in the *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith there is, "Allah ﷻ says, 'Every act of the son of Ādam is for him except for the fast, because it is for Me and I will recompense it. He gives up his appetite, his food and drink for My sake.'"[52] There is also in [fasting] steadfastness under the painful decrees by way of what hunger and thirst afflict the fasting person. The Prophet ﷺ used to name the month of fasting "The Month of Steadfastness."[53]

It is narrated in the hadith of the man from Banī Sulaym from the Prophet ﷺ that fasting is a half of steadfastness, and perhaps elucidation of the secret of the fact that it is a half of steadfastness is more difficult than elucidation of the secret of the fact that purity is a half of *īmān*, and Allah knows best.

With respect to his saying ﷺ, "The Qur'ān is a proof for you or against you," there are the words of Allah ﷻ:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاء وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلاَ يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إَلاَّ خَسَاراً

"We send down in the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy to the *mu'minūn*, but it only increases the wrongdoers in loss."[54] One of the right-acting first generations said, "No one sits with the Qur'ān and stands up from it untouched. On the contrary, he either profits or loses," and then he recited this *āyah*.

ʿAmr ibn Shu'ayb narrated from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Qur'ān will be cast in the form of a man on the Day of Rising, and a man will be brought who had memorised it and acted contrary to its commands, and it will become a disputant, saying, 'Lord! You made him bear me, and what an evil bearer he was! He contravened my limits, wasted my obligations, insisted on disobeying me, and gave up obedience to me,' and it will continue throwing proofs against him until it is said, 'He is your business,' and it will take him by the hand and not let him go until he throws him prostrate on his nose in the Fire. A right-acting man will be brought who had memorised it and safeguarded its command, and it will become a disputant on his behalf, saying, 'Lord! You

made him bear me, and what a good bearer he was! He safeguarded my limits, performed my obligations, avoided disobeying me, followed obedience to me,' continuing to argue on his behalf until it is said, 'He is your business,' and so it will take him by the hand, not letting him go until it dresses him in a set of silk brocade garments, ties the turban[55] of kingship on him, and gives him a glass of wine to drink."[56]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "The Qur'ān is an intercessor which will be granted intercession, and a disputant which will be believed. It will lead whoever puts it in front of him to the Garden, and it will lead whoever puts it behind his back to the Fire."[57]

He also said, "The Qur'ān will come on the Day of Rising and intercede for the one who knows it and will lead him to the Garden, or else it will bear witness against him and drive him to the Fire."

Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī said, "This Qur'ān will be a reward for you or a punishment for you, so follow the Qur'ān, and do not let it be that the Qur'ān follows you. The Qur'ān will alight with whoever follows it [as his guide] in the meadows of the Garden, and whomever it pursues it will push in the back of the neck and cast him into the Fire."[58]

Concerning his words ﷺ, “Everybody goes out in the morning and sells his self, then he either frees it from slavery or destroys it,” Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbān narrated the hadith of Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “People are [comprised of] two [types of those] who go out early in the morning: someone who purchases his self and then sets his self free and someone who destroys it.” In a version which aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated, “People are [comprised of] two [types of those] who go out early in the morning: someone who sells his self and destroys it, and someone who pays his self’s ransom and so sets it free.” Allah ﷻ says:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا

“And [by] the self and what proportioned it and inspired it with depravity or godliness, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed,”[59] meaning whoever purifies himself by obedience to Allah has succeeded, and he who covers it with acts of disobedience has failed. Obedience purifies the self and so it raises up, and acts of disobedience cover it

over and make it despicable so it sinks and becomes like someone buried in the soil.

The hadith shows that every person either exerts himself to destroy himself or to liberate himself. Whoever strives in obedience to Allah sells his self to Allah and so He sets it free from His punishment. Whoever strives to disobey Allah, sells his self in exchange for a despicable condition and destroys himself by such wrong actions as require the wrath of Allah and His punishment. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعْداً عَلَيْهِ حَقّاً فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالإِنجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُواْ بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُم بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

"Allah has bought from the *mu'minūn* their selves and their wealth in return for the Garden," up until his words, "Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the great victory."[60] He says, exalted is He:

يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاء مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

"And among the people there are some who give up everything,[61] desiring the good pleasure of Allah.

Allah is Ever-Gentle with His slaves."[62] He says, exalted is He:

إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَلَا ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ

"Say: 'The real losers are those who lose themselves and their families on the Day of Rising.' Is not that clear loss?"[63]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that Abū Hurayrah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said at the time when the *āyāt*:

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

'Warn your near relatives,'[64] was revealed, 'Community of Quraysh, buy yourselves from Allah. I cannot avail you in any way with respect to Allah. Banī ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, I cannot avail you in any way with respect to Allah.'" In al-Bukhari's narration there is, "Banī ʿAbd Manāf, buy yourselves from Allah. Banī ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, buy yourselves from Allah. Aunt of the Messenger of Allah, Fāṭimah daughter of Muḥammad, buy yourselves from Allah. I possess no authority over anything for the two of you from Allah."

In another version of Muslim there is that he called Quraysh and they assembled, both the common folk and the elite. He said, “Banī Kaʿb ibn Luʾayy, deliver yourselves from the Fire. Banī Murrah ibn Kaʿb deliver yourselves from the Fire. Banī ʿAbd Shams, deliver yourselves from the Fire. Banī ʿAbd Manāf, deliver yourselves from the Fire. Banī Hāshim, deliver yourselves from the Fire. Banī ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, deliver yourselves from the Fire. Fāṭimah, deliver yourself from the Fire. I possess no authority over anything for you all from Allah.”[65]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Kharāʾiṭī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, “Whoever says when he rises in the morning, ‘Subḥāna’llāh *wa biḥamdihi* – Glory be to Allah, by His praise,’ one thousand times has purchased himself from Allah, exalted is He, and he is free from the Fire from the end of his day.”[66]

A large group of the right-acting first generations purchased themselves from Allah with their wealth, of whom there were those who gave their wealth as *ṣadaqah*, such as Ḥabīb ibn Muḥammad, and such as he who gave his own weight in silver as *ṣadaqah* three or four times, i.e. Khālid aṭ-Ṭaḥḥān.

Some of them used to strive in doing right actions and say, “I am only working to set my neck free,” such as ʿAmr ibn ʿUtbah. Some of them used to glorify Allah twelve thousand times every day as the measure of his blood money, as if he had killed himself and so had to set himself free by paying its blood money. Al-Ḥasan said, “The *mu’min* is like a prisoner in the world; he strives to liberate himself. He doesn’t feel secure in any way until he meets Allah ﷻ.” He said, “Son of Ādam! you go out in the morning and return in the evening seeking profit, but let your own self be your concern, because you will never realise a profit like it.”

Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh said, “A man said to me once when I was a youth, ‘Free your neck as much as you are able in the world from the slavehood of the next life, because the prisoner of the next life is never freed.”

One of the right-acting first generations used to weep and say, “I do not have two selves, I only have one. When it is gone I will find no other.”

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah said, “Allah ﷻ made the Garden the price of your selves, so do not sell them for anything else.” He said, “Whoever’s self is valuable to him, then the world has no value to him.” Someone asked him, “Who is the most valuable of people?” He replied, “Whoever does not think all of the world a danger to himself.”

One of the earlier generations recited:

I determine the price of the precious self with its Lord,
for among all the creation none has its price.
By it the next life is owned, so if I sell it
for something of the world, that is deception.
If my self goes in exchange for some worldly thing which I obtain,
then my self will have gone and the price will have gone.

1 *Ṭuhūr* translated here as “purity” also means “becoming pure” but not “purification” as such. Trans.

2 An-Nasā’ī (5:5), Ibn Mājah (280)

3 At-Tirmidhī (3519), Aḥmad (5:363)

4 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 82

5 Sūrat al-Muddaththir: 4

6 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 222

7 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 143

8 Part of a longer hadith narrated by Muslim (395) and others

9 Ibn Mājah (2719)

10 Abū Dāwūd (2885), Ibn Mājah (54)

11 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (18544)

12 Al-Quḍāʿī in *Musnad ash-Shihāb* (159)

13 Muslim (234)

14 Muslim (234)

15 *Janābah* is the state caused by sexual intercourse or ejaculation requiring a *ghusl*. Trans.

16 Narrated by al-ʿUqaylī in *aḍ-Ḍuʿafā'* – The Weak Narrators (3:123), which means that he considered it weak. But others have authenticated it and it seems that that is also the position of the author. Ed.

17 Ibn Mājah (598)

18 Al-Bazzār (349)

19 At-Tirmidhī (3518)

20 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī (20:160)

21 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (20:334)

22 Muslim (804)

23 Al-Bukhārī (7563), Muslim (2694) and others

24 Abū Dāwūd (4799), *at-Tirmidhī* (2003) and others

25 This is mentioned in a hadith narrated by Aḥmad (4:287)

26 Mentioned in a long hadith narrated by ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (6703) and others

27 Al-Ḥākim (4:586)

28 At-Tirmidhī (3590)

29 At-Tirmidhī (2639), Ibn Mājah (4300), Aḥmad (2:213) and others

30 Aḥmad (2:170)

31 This is actually a hadith of an-Nasā'ī and others and not one of Imam Aḥmad and it is from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, and not Ibn ʿAmr . It is an oversight on the part of the author. Ed.

32 Aḥmad (2:302)

33 Abū Yaʿlā (3655) and others

34 Aḥmad (3:128)

35 Ad-Daylamī *Musnad al-Firdaws* (2622)

36 Aḥmad (1:245)

37 Abū Dāwūd (4985)

38 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:359)

39 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*, which is what al-Haythamī said in *Majmaʿ az-zawā'id* (2:122)

40 A *wird:* a portion of *ṣalāh*, Qur'ān recitation, *dhikr* or *duʿā*. Trans.

41 Aḥmad (169), Ibn Ḥibbān (1467)

42 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

43 Abū Dāwūd (1586)

44 At-Tirmidhī (614), aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (19:212) and it is not in *Musnad Aḥmad* with this narrator as the author suggests. Ed.

45 Sūrah Yūnus: 5

46 Sūrat al-Anbiyā': 48

47 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 44

48 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 15

49 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 157

50 As-Suyūṭī mentions it in *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr* (1:423)

51 Al-Bukhārī (1904), Muslim (1101) and others

52 Aḥmad (2:263) and an-Nasā'ī (4:218)

53 Sūrat al-Isrā': 82

54 The turban signifies royalty, and thus the tradition that the "Turban is the crown of the *mu'min*." Trans.

55 Ibn Abī Shaybah (10:491)

56 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (6010) and others

57 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:257)

58 Sūrat ash-Shams: 7-10

59 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 111

60 Literally, "Sells his self." Trans.

61 Literally, "Sells his self." Trans.

62 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 207

63 Sūrat az-Zumar: 15

64 Sūrat ash-Shuʿarā': 214

65 Al-Bukhārī (2753), Muslim (204, 206)

66 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* as mentioned by al-Haythamī (10:113)

الحديث الرابع والعشرون

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ ﷺ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فِيمَا يَرْوِي عَنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ: أَنَّهُ قَالَ: ﴿يَا عِبَادِي! إِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ الظُّلْمَ عَلَى نَفْسِي، وَجَعَلْتُهُ بَيْنَكُمْ مُحَرَّمًا، فَلا تَظَالَمُوا، يَا عِبَادِي! كُلُّكُمْ ضَالٌّ إِلاَّ مَنْ هَدَيْتُهُ، فَاسْتَهْدُونِي أَهْدِكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي! كُلُّكُمْ جَائِعٌ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَطْعَمْتُهُ، فَاسْتَطْعِمُونِي أُطْعِمْكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي! كُلُّكُمْ عَارٍ إِلاَّ مَنْ كَسَوْتُهُ، فَاسْتَكْسُونِي أَكْسُكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي! إِنَّكُمْ تُخْطِئُونَ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ؛ وَأَنَا أَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا، فَاسْتَغْفِرُونِي أَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ، يَا عِبَادِي! إِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَبْلُغُوا ضُرِّي فَتَضُرُّونِي، وَلَنْ تَبْلُغُوا نَفْعِي فَتَنْفَعُونِي، يَا عِبَادِي! لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ، وَآخِرَكُمْ، وَإِنْسَكُمْ، وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَتْقَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ؛ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا، يَا عِبَادِي! لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ، وَآخِرَكُمْ، وَإِنْسَكُمْ، وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ؛ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا، يَا عِبَادِي! لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ قَامُوا فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ، فَسَأَلُونِي، فَأَعْطَيْتُ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ مَسْأَلَتَهُ؛ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا عِنْدِي إِلاَّ كَمَا يَنْقُصُ الْمِخْيَطُ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ الْبَحْرَ، يَا عِبَادِي! إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أُحْصِيهَا لَكُمْ، ثُمَّ أُوَفِّيكُمْ إِيَّاهَا، فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا؛ فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللهَ، وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ؛ فَلا يَلُومَنَّ إِلاَّ نَفْسَهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Injustice

Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī ﷺ narrated from the Prophet ﷺ among that which he narrated from his Lord ﷻ that He said, “My slaves, I have forbidden injustice to Myself and have forbidden it between you, so do not wrong each other. My slaves, all of you are astray except for whomever I guide, so seek guidance from Me, I will guide you. My slaves, all of you are hungry except for whomever I feed, so ask Me to feed you, I will feed you. My slaves, all of you are naked except for whomever I clothe, so seek clothing from Me, I will clothe you. My slaves, truly you do wrong[1] by night and day and I forgive wrong actions altogether, so ask for My forgiveness, I will forgive you. My slaves, you cannot reach My harm so that you could harm Me, and you can never attain My benefit so that you could benefit Me. My slaves, even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your Jinn were according to the most God-fearing heart of any one man among you, that would not increase anything in My kingdom. My slaves, even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your jinn were according to the most wicked heart of any one man among you, that would not decrease anything in My kingdom. My slaves, even if the first and last of

you, your human beings and your jinn were to stand on one flat piece of land and they were to ask Me and I gave each one of them what he asked for, that would not decrease what I have except as the needle does when it is entered into the sea. My slaves, they are only your actions which I enumerate for you, then later I will repay you for them. So whoever experiences good then let him praise Allah, and whoever experiences other than that then let him only blame himself." Muslim narrated it (2577).

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz from Rabīʿah ibn Yazīd from Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī from Abū Dharr, and in the end of it there is that Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, "When Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī narrated this hadith he used to kneel on his knees."

Muslim also narrated it in the version of Qatādah from Abū Qilabah from Abū'l-Asma ar-Rahabi from Abū Dharr from the Prophet ﷺ but he did not transmit it with his wording and said, "He transmitted the hadith with the same general sense as that of Abū Idrīs, and the hadith of Abū Idrīs is more complete."

Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith in the version of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from

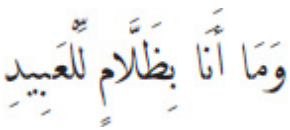
ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam that Abū Dharr said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Allah, exalted is He, says, “My slaves! all of you are astray except for whomever I guide, so ask Me for guidance and I will guide you. All of you are in need except for whomever I free of need, so ask Me and I will provide you. All of you are wrongdoing except for whomever I grant safety [from wrong actions]. Whoever of you knows that I have power to forgive and seeks My forgiveness, I will forgive him and I do not care. Even if the first of you and the last of you, those of you who are living and those of you who are dead, those who are moist and those who are dry were united in being like the heart of one of My slaves with the utmost *taqwā* that would not increase My kingdom so much as the wing of a gnat. Even if the first of you and the last of you, those of you who are living and those of you who are dead, your young and your old[2] were to assemble on one plain and every person were to ask for everything which he wished and I were to give every petitioner what he asked for, that would not decrease My kingdom except so much as when one of you passes the ocean and dips a needle into it and then lifts it up. That is because I am liberally generous, abundantly

wealthy and I do what I want. My giving is speech, and My punishment is speech. My command to a thing when I want is only to say to it, ‘Be!’ and it is.” This is the wording of at-Tirmidhī, and he said that it is good and *ṣaḥīḥ*.[3]

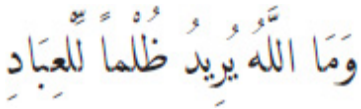
Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it in the same sense from a hadith of Abū Mūsā alAshʿarī from the Prophet ﷺ but his chain of transmission is weak.

Imam Aḥmad said about the hadith of Abū Dharr, “It is the noblest hadith of the people of Shām.”[4]

His saying ﷺ in that which he related from his Lord, “My slaves, I have forbidden injustice to Myself,” means that He prevents and restrains Himself from being unjust to His slaves, as He says ﷻ:



“and I do not wrong My slaves.”[5] He says:



“Allah does not want any injustice for His slaves.”[6] He says:

وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْماً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

"Allah desires no wrong for any being."[7] He says:

وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

"Your Lord does not wrong His slaves."[8] He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئاً

"Allah does not wrong people in any way."[9] He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

"Allah does not wrong anyone by so much as the smallest speck."[10] He says:

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَخَافُ ظُلْماً وَلَا هَضْماً

"But anyone who does right actions, being a *mu'min*, need fear no wrong or any belittlement."[11] *Haḍm* (belittlement) is that he should be short-changed in the recompense for his good deeds, and

ẓulm (wrong, injustice) is that he should be punished for someone else's wrong actions. The likes of these are very many in the Qur'ān.

It is one of the things that shows that Allah is able to be unjust, but that He does not do so out of His bounty, liberality, noble generosity and goodness towards His slaves.

Many of the people of knowledge explain *ẓulm* – wrong or injustice – as putting things in other than their correct places. As for those who explain it as transacting with someone else's property without his permission – and that is transmitted from Iyās ibn Muʿāwiyah and others – they say, "Injustice is impossible for Him and [anyone] other than Him is imaginary with respect to Him,[12] since everything that He does is transacting with His own property." Abū'l-Aswad ad-Du'alī replied in that manner to ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn when he asked him about the Decree.

Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Abū Sinān Saʿīd ibn Sinān from Wahb ibn Khālid al-Ḥimṣī that Ibn ad-Daylamī heard Ubayy ibn Kaʿb saying, "Even if Allah were to punish the inhabitants of His heavens and His earth, He would do so without wronging them. And if He were to show them mercy,

His mercy would be better for them than their actions," and that he went to Ibn Masʿūd who said something similar to him, and that then later he went to Zayd ibn Thābit who narrated something similar from the Prophet ﷺ.[13] There are some views about this hadith, and Wahb ibn Khālid is not well known for knowledge. It may be interpreted to mean that if He meant to punish them, He would decree [those actions] for them for which He should punish them, so that then He would not be unjust.

From the fact that He is the Creator of His slaves' actions some of which are unjust it does not necessarily follow that He should be characterised as unjust ﷻ just as He is not characterised by all the other ugly things which His slaves do, even though they are His creations and His decrees, because He is only characterised by His actions and not by the actions of His slaves. His slaves' actions are His creations and His doings, but he is not to be attributed any of them, but only that which is true of Him of His own attributes and His [own] actions, and Allah knows best.

His saying, "I have forbidden it between you, so do not wrong each other," means that He, exalted is He,

has forbidden injustice to His slaves and has forbidden them to be unjust to each other. It is *ḥarām* for each single slave to be unjust to others, along with the fact that injustice in itself is absolutely and unqualifiedly forbidden, and it is of two types:

First, there is wronging oneself, the worst of which is associating partners with Allah, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

"Associating others with Him is a terrible wrong."[14] The one who associates others with Allah regards that which is created to be in the same rank as He who creates and thus worships it and devotes himself to it. He puts things in places which are not their due. Most of that which occurs in the Qur'ān of threats against wrongdoers (*ẓālimūn*) refers to people who associate others with Allah, as He says ﷻ:

وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"It is the *kāfirūn* who are the wrongdoers."[15] Then following that [in seriousness] are the different types

of acts of disobedience, i.e. the major wrong actions and the less wrong actions.

Second, there is the slave's wronging others, and it is that which is mentioned in this hadith. The Prophet ﷺ said in his address during the Farewell Ḥajj, "Your blood, your property and your honour are sacred to you just as this day of yours is sacred, in this month of yours, and in this city of yours."[16] It is narrated of him that he delivered this address on the day of ʿArafah, and on the day of Sacrifice, and on the second day of the Days of *Tashrīq*. In another version there is that he then said, "Listen to me and you will live: do not wrong! do not wrong! do not wrong! A Muslim man's property is not permitted to you unless he is contented with it."[17] [18]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Wrongdoing [will be] darknesses on the Day of Rising."[19]

There is in both of them from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah will definitely grant time to the wrongdoer until when He takes him to task, he will not escape Him." Then he recited:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَا أَخَذَ الْقُرَىٰ وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ

“Such is the iron grip of your Lord when He seizes the cities which do wrong. His grip is painful, violent.”[20] [21] There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever has done some wrong to his brother should free himself of it by making up for it to him, because there is no dīnār nor dirham there, before some of his good actions are taken from him [and given] to his brother, and if he has no good actions then some of his brother’s wrong actions will be taken and flung on him.”[22]

His saying, “My slaves, all of you are astray except for whomever I guide, so seek guidance from Me, I will guide you. My slaves, all of you are hungry except for whomever I feed, so ask Me to feed you, I will feed you. My slaves, all of you are naked except for whomever I clothe, so seek clothing from Me, I will clothe you. My slaves, truly you do wrong by night and day and I forgive wrong actions altogether, so ask for My forgiveness, I will forgive you. “

This logically requires that all creatures need Allah, exalted is He, to obtain what is useful to them and prevent harm to themselves in their *dīnī* and worldly affairs, and that the slaves possess nothing of that for themselves, and that to whomever Allah is not

bounteous in terms of guidance and provision will never obtain them in the world, and that to whomever Allah is not bounteous in terms of forgiveness for his wrong actions, then his wrongdoing will destroy him in the next life.

Allah, exalted is He, says:

مَن يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُّرْشِدًا

"Whomever Allah guides is truly guided. But if He misguides someone, you will find no protector for them to guide them rightly."[23] There are a great many *āyāt* like this in the Qur'ān. He says, exalted is He:

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِن بَعْدِهِ

"Any mercy Allah opens up to people, no one can withhold, and any He withholds, no one can afterwards release."[24] He says, exalted is He:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

"Truly Allah, He is the Provider, the Possessor of Strength, the Sure."[25] He says:

فَابْتَغُوا عِندَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ

“So seek your provision from Allah and worship Him.”[26] He says:

وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي الأَرْضِ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

“There is no creature on the earth which is not dependent upon Allah for its provision.”[27]

He says, exalted is He, quoting Ādam and his wife, that they said:

قَالاَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will be among the lost.”[28] Quoting Nūḥ, peace and blessings be upon him, there is that he said:

وَإِلاَّ تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“If You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I will be among the lost.”[29]

Ibrāhīm the Khalīl ﷺ sought to prove by Allah's uniqueness in respect to these matters, that there is no god other than Him, and that everything associated with Him is false, when he said to his people:

قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ أَنتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمُ الْأَقْدَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ وَالَّذِي
يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

"He said, 'Have you really thought about what you worship, you and your fathers who came before? They are all my enemies – except for the Lord of all the worlds: He who created me and guides me; He who gives me food and gives me drink; and when I am ill, it is He who heals me; He who will cause my death, then give me life; He who I sincerely hope will forgive my mistakes on the Day of Reckoning,"[30] because the One Who alone creates and guides the slave, provides for him, makes him live and die in the world, and forgives his wrong actions in the next life, is alone worthy of having Godhood, worship, supplication and being shown humility and abasement. Allah ﷻ says:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"Allah is He who created you, then provides for you, then will cause you to die and then bring you back to life. Can any of your partner-gods do any of that? Glory be to Him and may He be exalted above anything they associate with Him!"[31]

There is in the hadith a proof that Allah loves the slaves to ask Him everything which is of use to them in their *dīn* and their world, food, drink, clothing, etc., just as they ask Him for guidance and forgiveness. There is in the hadith, "Let any of you ask his Lord for all of his necessities, even to the extent of asking Him for the thong of his sandal when it breaks."

One of the right-acting first generations used to ask Allah during his *ṣalāh* for all of his necessities even salt for his dough and fodder for his sheep. There is mention in the traditions from the Israelis that Mūsā ﷺ said, "Lord! some worldly need comes over me, but I am ashamed to ask You for it." He said, "Ask Me even for salt for your dough and fodder for your donkey." That is because everything which the slave needs, when he asks Allah for it he makes clear his

being in a state of need, and thus his need of Allah, and Allah loves that. One of the right-acting first generations used to be ashamed of asking Allah for any of his worldly needs, but it is better to follow the Sunnah.

Some people think that the saying, “All of you are astray except for whomever I guide,” contradicts the hadith of ʿIyāḍ ibn Ḥimār that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ says, ‘I created My slaves naturally inclining to the truth (*ḥunafā*’),’” and in another version, “‘...as Muslims, and then the *shayṭāns* caused them to deviate,’”[32] but it is not so, because Allah created the descendants of Ādam and gave them the natural disposition to accept Islam, and an inclination to it as opposed to other [*dīns*], and a preparedness for that, and a potential, but there is no avoiding the need for the slave to actually learn Islam, since before learning he is ignorant and knows nothing. This is as Allah ﷻ says:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحاً مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ

“Allah brought you out of your mothers’ wombs knowing nothing at all,”[33] and He said to His Prophet ﷺ:

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَى

"Did He not find you wandering and guide you?"[34] meaning that He found you not having knowledge of that which He taught you of the Book and the wisdom, as He says, exalted is He:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

"Accordingly We have revealed to you a *Rūḥ* by Our command. You had no idea of what the Book was, nor faith."[35] Man is born naturally disposed to accept the truth, and then if Allah guides him He causes someone to teache him the guidance and so he becomes actually guided after being potentially guidable. If Allah destines humiliation for him, he will attach someone to him who will teach that which will alter his natural disposition, as he said ﷺ, "Every child born is born with the natural disposition (fitrah), and then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian[36]."[37]

As for the *mu'min* asking Allah for guidance, there are two types of guidance: a general type of guidance to Islam and *īmān*, and it is that which the *mu'min*

gets, and a detailed guidance and that is guidance to knowledge of the details of all the parts of *īmān* and Islam, and help in doing that. Every *mu'min* needs this type, day and night. It is for that reason that Allah orders

His slaves to recite in every *rakʿah* of the prayer:

اهدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ المُستَقِيمَ

"Guide us on the Straight Path,"[38] and the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication at night:

اهْدِنِي لِمَا اخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِكَ إِنَّكَ تَهْدِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

"Guide me with respect to that of the truth about which there is disagreement, by Your permission. You guide whom You will to a straight path."[39] For this reason the response to the man who sneezes is:

يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ

"May Allah show you mercy," and then he should reply:

يَهْدِيكُمُ اللَّهُ

“May Allah guide you,” as is the sunnah practice, even if those of the people of Iraq who reject this do so thinking that a Muslim does not need anyone to supplicate for guidance for him. However, the clear majority of the people of knowledge are opposed to them and follow the Sunnah in that respect. The Prophet ﷺ told ʿAlī to ask Allah for the ability to hit the mark [the truth] and for guidance,[40] and taught al-Ḥasan to say in the prayer known as *qunūt* in the *witr*:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ

“O Allah guide me among those whom You guide.”[41]

As for *istighfār* for wrong actions, that is seeking forgiveness[42] and the slave is in urgent need of it since he makes mistakes night and day. Turning in *tawbah* and seeking forgiveness, the command to do them and urgent incitements to them, are mentioned repeatedly in the Qur’ān. At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Every one of the desdendants of Ādam repeatedly makes mistakes, and the best of those are the ones who repeatedly turn in *tawbah*.”[43]

Al-Bukhārī narrated the hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “By Allah, I certainly ask forgiveness of Allah and turn to Him in *tawbah* more than seventy times a day.”[44] An-Nasā’ī and Ibn Mājah narrated both of them in this wording, “I certainly seek forgiveness of Allah and turn to Him in *tawbah* a hundred times a day.”

Muslim narrated the hadith of al-Agharr al-Muzanī that he heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “People! turn to your Lord in *tawbah*, because I turn to him in *tawbah* one hundred times a day.”[45] An-Nasā’ī narrated it and his wording was, “People! turn to your Lord in *tawbah* and seek His forgiveness, because I turn in *tawbah* to Allah and seek His forgiveness one hundred times a day.”[46]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith that Ḥudhayfah said, “There was a certain sharpness in my language towards my family which I would not exceed to anything else [for fear of its severity], and so I mentioned that to the Prophet ﷺ and he said, ‘Where are you with respect to asking forgiveness, Ḥudhayfah? Truly, I seek forgiveness of Allah one hundred times a day.’”[47] There is a hadith of Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Certainly, I seek

forgiveness of Allah one hundred times a day and turn in *tawbah* to Him."[48]

An-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith that Abū Mūsā said, "We were seated and the Prophet ﷺ came and said, 'No morning has dawned in which I did not seek forgiveness of Allah one hundred times."[49]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith that Ibn ʿUmar said, "We reckoned that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say one hundred times in a single gathering:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

'Lord, forgive me and turn to me; truly You are the Oft-Turning the AllMerciful.'"[50]

An-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith that Abū Hurayrah said, "I never saw anyone who would say:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

'I seek forgiveness of Allah and turn to Him in *tawbah*,' more often than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."[51]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ used to say:

اَللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَحْسَنُوا اسْتَبْشَرُوا وَإِذَا أَسَاؤُوا اسْتَغْفَرُوا

"O Allah, make me one of those who when they do good, rejoice, and when they do wrong, seek forgiveness."[52] We will mention the rest of the topic of seeking forgiveness later inshā'Allāh, exalted is He.

His saying, "My slaves, you cannot reach My harm so that you could harm Me, and you can never attain My benefit so that you could benefit Me," means that the slaves are not able to make benefit or harm reach to Allah, because Allah, exalted is He, in Himself is wealthily independent and praiseworthy, and He has no need of the acts of obedience of the slaves, and the benefit from them does not return to Him, but rather it is only they who benefit from them. He does not suffer harm from their acts of disobedience, but rather it is only they who suffer from them. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا

"Do not let those who rush headlong into *kufr* sadden you. They do not harm Allah in any way."[53] And He says:

وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا

“Those who turn on their heels do not harm Allah in any way.”[54]

The Prophet ﷺ used to say, “Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray, and he will harm no one but himself, and will not harm Allah in any way.”[55]

Allah ﷻ says:

وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا

“But if you are *kāfir*, what is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to Allah. Allah is Rich Beyond Need, Praiseworthy.”[56] He says, quoting Mūsā:

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِن تَكْفُرُوٓا۟ أَنتُمْ وَمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

“Mūsā said, ‘If you were to be ungrateful, you and everyone on the earth, Allah is Rich Beyond Need, Praiseworthy.’”[57] He says:

وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

“But if anyone is *kāfir*, Allah is Rich Beyond Need of any being.”[58] He says:

لَن يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُمْ

“Their flesh and blood does not reach Allah but your *taqwā* does reach Him.”[59]

That means that He, exalted is He, loves His slaves to have *taqwā* of Him and obey Him, just as He dislikes that they disobey Him. For this reason, He rejoices at the repentance of someone who turns in *tawbah* more strongly than does someone whose mount, on which were his food and drink, becomes lost in desert wastes, and he seeks it until he gives up in despair, then submits to the fact that he is going to die and despairs of life, then his eye is overcome and he sleeps, but then he wakes up and there it is standing beside him. This is the highest joy that a human being can imagine. All of this is despite His being rich beyond need of His slaves’ acts of obedience and their acts of turning in *tawbah* to Him, and along with the fact that their benefit only returns to them and not to Him, yet this is from the perfection of His liberal generosity and goodness to His slaves, and from

His love for that which will be of benefit to them and repel harm from them. He loves His slaves to recognise Him, love Him, fear Him, have *taqwā* of Him, obey Him and draw near to Him, and He loves that they should know that no one forgives wrong actions apart from Him, and that He is able to forgive the wrong actions of His slaves, as is narrated by ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam from Abū Dharr in this hadith, "Whoever of you knows that I have the ability to forgive and then asks Me to forgive, I will forgive him and I do not care."

There is in the *ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave did a wrong action and said, 'Lord, I have done a wrong action, so forgive me.' So Allah said, 'My slave knows that he has a Lord Who forgives wrong actions and takes to task for wrong actions, and so I have forgiven My slave.'"[60] In the hadith of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib from the Prophet ﷺ there is that when he mounted his riding beast he praised Allah three times, said the *takbīr* three times and said:

سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْلِي فَإِنَّهُ لاَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ

“Glorious are You! I have wronged myself, so forgive me, because no one forgives wrong actions except for You,” then he laughed and said, “Your Lord is proud of His slave when he says, ‘Lord forgive me my wrong actions,’ knowing that ‘no one forgives wrong actions other than Me.’” Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it and [at-Tirmidhī] declared it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.[61]

There is in the *ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, “By Allah! Allah is more merciful to His slaves than is a mother to her child.”[62]

One of Dhu’n-Nūn’s companions used to go around and cry, “Ah! where is my heart! Who has found my heart?” One day he entered one of the side-streets and found a little boy crying while his mother was hitting him. Then she threw him out of the house and locked the door. The little boy began to go right and left, not knowing where he would go or what he should do. Then he returned to the door, and began to cry, saying, “Mummy, who will open the door for me if you close your door to me? Who will bring me close to them if you reject me? Who will draw me close after you have been angry with me?” The mother felt compassion for him, and she rose and looked through

the cracks in the door, and she discovered her son with tears running down his cheeks, rolling in the dust, and so she opened the door. She took him, placed him in her lap, and began kissing him, saying, “O my delight, my darling! You are the one who provoked me, and you are the one who exposed yourself to what happened to you. If you had obeyed me, you would never have experienced anything unpleasant from me.” The youth was overcome by emotion. He stood up and cried out aloud. Then he said, “I have found my heart! I have found my heart!”

Reflect on His words:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ

“Those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?)”[63] because there is an indication in it that wrongdoers have no one else with whom to take refuge and depend upon for the forgiveness of their wrong actions other than Him. His saying concerning the three who were left behind is similar:

وَعَلَى الثَّلاَثَةِ الَّذِينَ خُلِّفُواْ حَتَّى إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَظَنُّواْ أَن لاَّ مَلْجَأَ مِنَ اللّهِ إِلاَّ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُواْ إِنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

"And also towards the three who were left behind, so that when the earth became narrow for them, for all its great breadth, and their own selves became constricted for them and they realised that there was no refuge from Allah except in Him, He turned to them so that they might turn to Him. Allah is the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful."[64] He made His turning towards them to be a consequence of their realisation that there is no refuge from Allah except with Him, because when the slave fears a created being he flees from him to another, but if he fears Allah, then he has no refuge and nowhere to flee except Him. This is as the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

لَا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنْجَا مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ

"There is no refuge and no salvation from You except with You."[65] He also used to say:

أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِن سَخَطِكَ وَبِعَفْوِكَ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِكَ وَبِكَ مِنكَ

"I seek refuge with Your good pleasure from Your displeasure, and with Your pardoning from Your punishment, and with You from You."[66]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ ﷺ said, "Every night in which there is a confused darkness and the night relaxes the garment of its veiling, then the Majestic, and His majesty is majestic, cries out, 'Who is there who is more liberally generous than Me? And yet the creatures disobey Me, while I watch vigilantly over them and I guard them in their beds as if they had not disobeyed Me. I undertake to protect them as if they had not done wrong in that which is between Me and them. I bestow bounty liberally on the disobedient, and I am gracious to the wrongdoer. Who called on Me and I did not respond to him? Or who asked Me and I did not give him? Or who sat patiently at My door and I turned him away? I am the Bounteous and bounty is from Me. I am the Liberally Generous and liberal generosity is from Me. I am the Nobly Generous and noble generosity is from Me. A part of My noble generosity is that I forgive the disobedient after their acts of disobedience. A part of My noble generosity is

that I give the slave what he asks Me for, and what he does not ask Me for. A part of My noble generosity is that I give the one who turns in *tawbah* as if he had not disobeyed Me. Where will creatures flee from Me? Where will the disobedient turn if they turn away from My door?'" Abū Nuʿaym narrated it.[67]

Another person has the following in the same sense:

I have done wrong and I have not done good and I come to You in *tawbah*,

And where does the slave have to place to flee from his masters?

He wishes for forgiveness and if his expectation is disappointed,

Then there is no one on the earth who is more disappointed.

Then his saying after this, "My slaves, even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your Jinn were according to the most God-fearing heart of any one man among you, that would not increase anything in My kingdom. My slaves, even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your jinn were according to the most wicked heart of any one man among you,

that would not decrease anything in My kingdom," indicates that His kingdom is not increased by people's obedience even if all of them are good people of *taqwā*, and if their hearts are like the heart of the man with the most *taqwā* among them. His kingdom does not decrease because of the disobedience of the disobedient, even if all the jinn and the human beings were wickedly disobedient and their hearts like the heart of the most wicked man among them. He, glorious is He, in His essence is Rich Beyond need of anyone other than Him. He has absolute perfection in His essence, His attributes and His actions. His kingdom is perfect and there is no defect or imperfection in it of any sort.

Someone said, “Indeed His creating the creation in the system that exists is more perfect than creating it in any other way and it is better than it [the creation] existing according to any other [system], and that evil which is in it is a relative evil which can be ascribed in relation to some things but not others, but not an absolute unqualified evil in whose respect its being nonexistent would be better than its being existent in every way, but rather its existence is better than its non-existence.” He said, “This is the meaning of His saying, ‘In His hand is the good,’ and of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, ‘And evil is not [to be ascribed] to You,’ meaning that absolute and total evil whose non-existence would be preferrable to its existence is not to be found in His kingdom, because Allah, exalted is He, originated His creation as required by His wise judgement and His justice, and He chose some people from among them by His bounty leaving the rest by His justice because of His far-reaching wisdom in that.”

This is debatable, and it contradicts what is in this hadith, that even if all people were according to the description of the most perfect of His creation in terms of goodness and *taqwā*, that would not increase His

kingdom in any way, even to the extent of a gnat's wing, and that even if they were all according to the description of the most deficient people in wickedness, that would not decrease His kingdom in any way. It shows that His kingdom is perfect no matter how it is considered and that it does not increase nor become more perfect by acts of obedience, nor does it decrease because of acts of disobedience, and that they have no effect on Him in any way.

Also in this section there is a proof that the root in both *taqwā* and wickedness is the heart, and that when the heart is good and has *taqwā* then the limbs will be good, and when the heart is bad the limbs will be bad, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "*Taqwā* is here," and he indicated his chest.[68]

What is meant by His saying, "My slaves, even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your jinn were to stand on one flat piece of land and they were to ask Me and I gave each one of them what he asked for, that would not decrease what I have except as the needle does when it is entered into the sea," is to mention the perfection of His power and capability, glorious is He, and the perfection of His kingdom, and that His kingdom and its treasuries do not become

exhausted and do not decrease by giving, even if He were to give the first and the last of the jinn and human beings everything which they asked Him for in one place. In this there is an exhortation for people to ask Him and to seek their necessities from Him. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The hand of Allah is abundantly full; spending does not decrease it, continuously pouring out gifts by night and by day. Have you thought about what He has spent since He created the heavens and the earth? because it has not decreased that which is in His right hand."[69]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When any of you supplicate, then let him not say, 'O Allah, forgive me if You wish. Rather, he should be of firm resolve in asking, and let him have a great desire, because nothing is great in comparison with Allah."[70]

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī said, "When you supplicate Allah, then ask for a great deal, because nothing exhausts what He has. When you supplicate, then have a strong resolve, because no one can try to coerce Allah."

There is in some of the Israeli traditions that Allah ﷻ says, “Is anyone other than Me hoped for in severe distress, while distress is in My hand and I am the Living the Self-Sustaining? Is other than Me hoped for and is his door knocked upon early in the morning hours, while in My hand are the keys of the treasuries, and My door is open to whoever supplicates Me? Who is there who has wished for Me because of some misfortune and I have severed relations with him? Or who is there who hoped for Me because of some tremendous misfortune and I have severed relations with him? Or who is there who has knocked on My door and I didn’t open it for him? I am the ultimate goal of wishes, so how can wishes be blocked from Me? Am I miserly so that My slave sees me as mean? Do not the world and the next life, generosity and bounty all belong to Me? What prevents those who wish from wishing for Me? Even if I were to gather together the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, then gave every single one of them the same as I gave all of them, and made every single one of them attain his wishes, that would not decrease My kingdom by so much as the leg of the tiniest ant. How could a kingdom which I sustain diminish? So woe to those

who despair of My mercy! And woe to whoever disobeys Me and pounces upon the things which I have forbidden!"

His saying, "That would not decrease what I have except as the needle does when it is entered into the sea," is literally true since that which He has does not decrease in any way, as He, exalted is He, says:

مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

"What is with you runs out but what is with Allah goes on for ever",[71] because when a needle is plunged into the sea and brought out it does not decrease the sea in any way. Similarly if we suppose that a sparrow drank from it, for example, still the ocean would not decrease in any way. It was for this reason that Khiḍr struck this metaphor for Mūsā, peace be upon both of them, with respect to the knowledge that both of them had compared to the knowledge of Allah ﷻ. That is because the sea is continually refreshed by all of the world's waters and its running rivers, so that no matter what is taken out of it, it does not decrease at all, because it is being refreshed by water in excess of what is taken from it. It is similar with respect to the

water of the Garden and whatever else is in it: it does not come to an end, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ

"and fruits in abundance never failing, unrestricted."[72] Thus it has been said that, "Whenever a fruit is plucked, the like of it appears in its place," and it has been narrated also ...twice the like of it..."[73] So it never decreases. The saying of the Prophet ﷺ bears witness to that, during the *khuṭbah* of the solar eclipse, when he said, "I saw the Garden and I reached out to take a bunch of grapes from it. If I had taken it you would have eaten from it as long as the world endures." They narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās,[74] and Imam Aḥmad narrated it in a version from Jābir, and his wording was, "If I had brought it to you, everyone between heaven and earth would have eaten from it and they would not have decreased it in any way."

It is similar with the flesh of fowl which the people of the Garden eat, it is replaced and returns alive as it was without being decreased. This has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways in which

there is some weakness, and Kaʿb said it. It has also been narrated that Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī himself said, “Drink is similar. One can drink until one runs out of breath, and then it will revert to what it was.” One of the right acting people of knowledge was seen in dream some time after his death, and he said, “Since I left you I have eaten only a bit of fowl flesh. Do you not know that the food of the Garden does not come to an end?”

The reason that that which is with Allah does not come to an end by giving is made clear in the hadith *at-Tirmidhī* and Ibn Mājah narrated when He says, “That is because I am liberally generous, abundantly wealthy and I do what I want. My giving is speech, and My punishment is speech. My command to a thing when I want is only to say to it, ‘Be!’ and it is.” This is like His saying ﷻ:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

“His command when He desires a thing is just to say to it, ‘Be!’ and it is,”[75] and His saying, exalted is He:

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَن نَّقُولَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ

"Our Word to a thing when We desire it is just to say to it 'Be!' and it is."[76]

There is in the *Musnad al-Bazzār*, with a chain of transmission about which there are some views, a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The treasuries of Allah are speech. When He desires something He says to it, 'Be!' and so it is." When He, glorious is He, wants something whether it is giving or punishing, etc., He says to it, "Be!" and it is. How could it be imagined that that could ever decrease? It is similar when He desires to create anything, He says to it, "Be!" and it is, as He says:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِندَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ

"The likeness of 'Īsā in Allah's sight is the same as Ādam. He created him from earth and then He said to him, 'Be!' and he was."[77]

There is in some of the Israeli traditions that Allah, exalted is He, revealed to Mūsā ﷺ "Mūsā, do not fear any other than Me as long as I have authority, and My authority is uninterruptedly forever. Mūsā, never become concerned about your provisions as long as the treasuries are full, and My treasuries are full, and they are never consumed. Mūsā, do not become intimate with any other than Me as long as you find Me your intimate companion. Mūsā, do not feel secure from My planning as long as you have not crossed the Sirat [path over Jahannam to the Garden]." Someone said:

> Do not humble yourself to any creature because
> of desire,
> for that will harm your *dīn*.
> Seek your provision from Allah of that which is
> in His treasuries,
> because they are only in between *kāf* and *nūn*
> (kun – Be!)

His saying, "My slaves, they are only your actions which I enumerate for you, then later I will repay you for them," means that He, glorious is He, will reckon

His slaves' actions and then He will fully recompense them for them. This is like His words:

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْراً يَرَهُ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرّاً يَرَهُ

"Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. Whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it,"[78] and His words:

وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِراً وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَداً

"They will find there everything they did and your Lord will not wrong anyone at all,"[79] and His words:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَراً وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِن سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَداً بَعِيداً

"On the Day that each self finds the good it did, and the evil it did, present there in front of it, it will wish there were an age between it and then,"[80] and His Words:

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعاً فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ

“On the Day Allah raises up all of them together, He will inform them of what they did. Allah has recorded it while they have forgotten it.”[81]

The outward sense of His saying, “Then later I will repay you for them,” is that it means their being repaid on the Day of Rising, as He says, exalted is He:

وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“You will be paid your wages in full on the Day of Rising.”[82] It is also a possible interpretation that what is meant is that He will repay His slaves for their actions in the world and the next life, as in His words:

مَن يَعْمَلْ سُوءاً يُجْزَ بِهِ

“Anyone who does evil will be repaid for it.”[83] It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ explained that as meaning that the *mu’minūn* will be repaid for their wrong actions in the world, and that their good actions will be stored up for them in the next life where they will be paid their rewards in full. As for the *kāfir*, the reward for his good actions is hastened for him here in the world, and his wrong actions are

stored up for him and he is punished for them in the next life. The fulfilment of the actions is the fulfilment of payment of their recompense, whether good or bad. The bad action is repaid with the like of it without any increase, unless Allah pardons it entirely. The good action is multiplied in reward up to ten multiples, seven hundred multiples up to numerous multiples [of the measure of the original good action] whose measure only Allah knows, as He says ﷻ:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"The steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning."[84]

His words, "So whoever experiences good then let him praise Allah, and whoever experiences other than that then let him only blame himself," indicates that all good is from Allah as a bounty from Him to His slave without his deserving it, and that all evil is from the son of Ādam because of his following his self's desires and whims, as Allah ﷻ says:

مَّا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن نَّفْسِكَ

“Any good thing that happens to you comes from Allah. Any bad thing that happens to you comes from yourself. “[85] ʿAlī said ﷺ “The slave must only hope for his Lord and only fear his wrong action, because when Allah, glorious is He, wishes to direct a slave to attain success and to guide him, He helps him and grants him success in obeying Him, and that is pure bounty from Him. When He wishes to humble and disgrace a slave, He entrusts him to his self and gives it a free hand with him. Then *shayṭān* misguides him because of his neglect of remembrance of Allah, and so he follows his whims, opinions and desires, and his affair exceeds the bounds, and that is from His justice. The proof has been established against the slave by the revelation of the Book, and the sending of the Messengers, and no one has any remaining argument against Allah after the Messengers.”

So after this, if what is meant by His saying, “So whoever experiences good then let him praise Allah, and whoever experiences other than that then let him only blame himself,” that whoever experiences that in the world is commanded to praise Allah for what he experiences of recompense for right actions, the

recompense which is hastened for him in the world, as He says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a *mu'min*, We will give them a good life and We will recompense them according to the best of what they did,"[86] and he is also commanded to blame himself for the wrong actions he has done whose punishment he experiences in the world, as He says, exalted is He:

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

"We will give them a taste of lesser punishment before the greater punishment, so that hopefully they will turn back."[87] When some trial happens to the *mu'min* in the world, he turns upon himself and blames himself, and that calls him to return to Allah in *tawbah* and seeking forgiveness. There is in the *Musnad* and in the *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When sickness occurs to the *mu'min*, and then Allah restores him to health and well-being, it is an expiation for the

wrong actions he has done previously, and it is a warning to him with respect to what is ahead of him in his life. When the hypocrite becomes ill and is restored to health, he is like the camel whose owners had hobbled him and then released him: he does not know why they hobbled him nor why they released him."[88]

Salmān al-Fārisī said, "The Muslim is definitely tried, and it will be an expiation for that which he has previously done and something which calls on him to return [to Allah and to right action] in what remains [of his life]. The *kāfir* [too] is tried, but his likeness is that of a camel which is released, but it does not know why it has been released, and it is hobbled but it does not know why it has been hobbled."

If what is meant by it is those who experience good or otherwise in the next life, then it is a means of informing us that those who experience good in the next life praise Allah for that, but that those who experience something else blame themselves but at a time when blame is of no use. Thus the form of the phrase is that it is an imperative, but its meaning is that it is informative, as in his [imperative] saying ﷺ "Whoever deliberately lies about [attributing words and deeds to] me, let him prepare his seat in the Fire," meaning [in an informative sense] that the one who lies about him will prepare his seat in the Fire.

Allah, exalted is He, informs us that the people of the Garden praise Allah because He has provided them out of His bounty, and He says:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ

"We will strip away any rancour in their hearts. Rivers will flow under them and they will say, 'Praise be to Allah who has guided us to this! We would not have been guided, had Allah not guided us,"[89] and He says, "They will say:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ

'Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of this land, letting us settle in the Garden wherever we want,'"[90] and He says:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزَنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ

"They will say, 'Praise be to Allah who has removed all sadness from us. Truly our Lord is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Thankful: He who has lodged us, out of His favour, in the Abode of Permanence where no weariness or fatigue affects us.'"[91] He informs us that the people of the Fire blame themselves and hate themselves with the strongest hatred, when He says, exalted is He:

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدتُّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِيَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنفُسَكُم

"When the affair is decided Shayṭān will say, 'Allah made you a promise, a promise of truth, and I made you a promise but broke my promise. I had no

authority over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. Do not, therefore, blame me but blame yourselves."[92] He also says, exalted is He:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنَادَوْنَ لَمَقْتُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ مِن مَّقْتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ إِذْ تُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى الْإِيمَانِ فَتَكْفُرُونَ

"Those who were *kāfir* will be addressed: 'Allah's hatred of you, when you were called to *īmān* but then chose *kufr*, is even greater than your hatred of yourselves.'"[93]

The right-acting first generations used to exert themselves in doing right actions from fear of the self-reproach that might happen on the cessation of actions [at death] because of their paucity. There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Every dead person regrets. If he was one who did good, he regrets that he did not do more, and if he was wrongdoing, he regrets that he did not return to the right way."[94]

Someone asked Masrūq, "What if you were to fall short in some of the exertions that you do?" He replied, "By Allah! even if someone [an angel] came to me and told me that I would not be punished, I would exert myself in acts of worship." Someone asked, "Why

is that?" He answered, "So that my self will free me of blame if I enter the Fire, so that I do not blame it. Has it not reached you that Allah says, exalted is He:

وَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ

'No! I swear by the self-reproaching self'[95]? They only blame themselves when they reach Jahannam, the Zabāniyyah [angels of punishment] put the chains around their necks, a separation is made between them and that which they desire, all their wishes are cut off, and mercy is removed from them, then each one of them will turn on himself and blame himself."

ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbd Qays used to say, "By Allah! I will exert myself. By Allah! I will exert myself. Then if I am saved it is by the mercy of Allah, and if not, I will not blame myself."

Ziyād the *mawlā* of Ibn ʿAyyāsh used to say to Ibn al-Munkadir and Ṣafwān ibn Sulaym, "Be serious! Be serious! Beware! Beware! Then if the matter is as we hope, what you will have done will be extra, but if it is not [as we hope] you will not blame yourselves."

Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh used to say, "Exert yourselves in action. Then if the affair is as we hope,

of the mercy of Allah and His pardon, then it will be extra degrees for us in the Garden. But if the matter is terrible as we fear and of which we are wary, then we will not say:

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

'Our Lord! take us out! We will act rightly, differently from the way we used to act!'[96] Rather we will say, 'We acted, but that did not benefit us.'"

1 The verb *akhṭa'a* means literally "he missed the mark or the way" but it also means "he did wrong." Trans.

2 Literally, "those who are moist and those who are dry". Trans.

3 At-Tirmidhī (2495), Ibn Mājah (4257), Aḥmad (5:154, 177)

4 It was related entirely by people from Shām. Trans.

5 Sūrah Qāf: 29

6 Sūrah Ghāfir: 31

7 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 108

8 Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 46

9 Sūrah Yūnus: 44

10 Sūrat an-Nisā': 40

11 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 109

12 i.e. in defining *ẓulm* as transacting in someone else's property, that someone else with respect to Allah is imaginary since there is no one else that possesses anything other than Allah. Ed.

13 Abū Dāwūd (4699), Ibn Mājah (77), and Ibn Ḥibbān (727)

14 Sūrah Luqmān: 13

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 254

16 Al-Bukhārī (67) and Muslim (1679)

17 Aḥmad (5:72-73)

18 This hadith renders taxation beyond *zakāh* problematic. Trans.

19 Al-Bukhārī (2447), Muslim (2579)

20 Sūrah Hūd: 102

21 Al-Bukhārī (4686), Muslim (2583)

22 Al-Bukhārī (2217)

23 Sūrat al-Kahf: 17

24 Sūrah Fāṭir: 2

25 Sūrat adh-Dhāriyāt: 58

26 Sūrat al-ʿAnkabūt: 17

27 Sūrah Hūd: 6

28 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 22

29 Sūrah Hūd: 47

30 Sūrat ash-Shuʿarā': 75-82

31 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 40

32 Muslim (2865) and others

33 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 78

34 Sūrat aḍ-Ḍuḥā: 7

35 Sūrat ash-Shūrā: 52

36 Magians (*Mājūs*) were dualists believing in two opposite divine powers. Trans.

37 Al-Bukhārī (1358), Muslim (2658) and others

38 Sūrat al-Fatihah: 5. The numbering of the *āyāt* of Sūrat al-Fātiḥah, as with all the rest of the Qur'ān, have differences between the *ʿulamā*'. However, this difference is particularly significant, since it revolves around whether the *Basmalah* is considered an *āyah* or not. According to the People of Madīnah it is not an *āyah* of the Fātiḥah or of any other sūrah except where it occurs within Sūrat an-Naml even though it is written in the *muṣḥaf* at the beginning of the sūrahs. According to Imām ash-Shāfiʿī it is an *āyah* of the Fātiḥah and of every sūrah except of course Sūrat at-Tawbah which begins without it. The proof of the People of Madīnah was the actual practice of the Prophet ﷺ and the *khulafā' ar-rāshidūn* رضي الله عنهم when leading the prayer since they began without the *Basmalah*, as well as a number of hadith which refer to the Fātiḥah without the *Basmalah*. The proof of Imām ash-Shāfiʿī was a counter hadith which refers to the Fātiḥah with the *Basmalah*. Trans.

39 Muslim (770) and others

40 Muslim (2725) and others

41 Abū Dāwūd (1425), *at-Tirmidhī* (464), an-Nasā'ī (3:248), Ibn Mājah (1178) and others

42 Literally "the covering over" of wrong actions so that the slave does not see them in his reckoninng. Trans.

43 At-Tirmidhī (2499), Ibn Mājah (4251) and others

44 Al-Bukhārī (6307)

45 Muslim (2702)

46 An-Nasā'ī in *al-Kubrā* (6:116)

47 Aḥmad (5:396), Ibn Ḥibbān (926) and al-Ḥākim (1:511)

48 An-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (440)

49 An-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (441)

50 Abū Dāwūd (1516), *at-Tirmidhī* (3434), Ibn Mājah (3814)

51 An-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (454)

52 Aḥmad (6:129)

53 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 176

54 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 144

55 Abū Dāwūd (1097)

56 Sūrat an-Nisā': 131

57 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 8

58 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 97

59 Sūrat al-Hajj: 35

60 Al-Bukhārī (7507), Muslim (2758) and others

61 Abū Dāwūd (2602), at-Tirmidhī (3446), Aḥmad (1:97)

62 Al-Bukhārī (5999), Muslim (2754)

63 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

64 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 118

65 Al-Bukhārī (247), Muslim (2711) and others

66 Muslim (486) and others

67 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:92)

68 Muslim (2564)

69 Al-Bukhārī (5352), Muslim (993)

70 Al-Bukhārī (6339), Muslim (2679)

71 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 96

72 Sūrat al-Wāqiʿah: 32-33

73 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (1449)

74 Al-Bukhārī (1052), Muslim (907)

75 Sūrah Yā Sīn: 82

76 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 40

77 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 59

78 Sūrat az-Zilzālah: 7-8

79 Sūrat al-Kahf: 49

80 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 30

81 Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 6

82 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 185

83 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 123

84 Sūrat az-Zumar: 11

85 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 78

86 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 97

87 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 21

88 Muslim (2564)

89 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 43

90 Sūrat az-Zumar: 74

91 Sūrah Fāṭir: 34-35

92 Sūrah Ibrāhīm 24

93 Sūrah Ghāfir: 10

94 Abū Dāwūd (3089)

95 Sūrat al-Qiyāmah: 2

96 Sūrah Fāṭir: 37

الحديث الخامس والعشرون

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ ﷺ أَنَّ نَاسًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ قَالُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! ذَهَبَ أَهْلُ الدُّثُورِ بِالأُجُورِ، يُصَلُّونَ كَمَا نُصَلِّي، وَيَصُومُونَ كَمَا نَصُومُ، وَيَتَصَدَّقُونَ بِفُضُولِ أَمْوَالِهِمْ، قَالَ: ﴿أَوَ لَيْسَ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللهُ لَكُمْ مَا تَصَّدَّقُونَ، إِنَّ بِكُلِّ تَسْبِيحَةٍ صَدَقَةً، وَكُلِّ تَكْبِيرَةٍ صَدَقَةً، وَكُلِّ تَحْمِيدَةٍ صَدَقَةً، وَكُلِّ تَهْلِيلَةٍ صَدَقَةً، وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَنَهْيٌ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَفِي بُضْعِ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ﴾، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَ يَأْتِي أَحَدُنَا شَهْوَتَهُ، وَيَكُونُ لَهُ فِيهَا أَجْرٌ؟ قَالَ: ﴿أَ رَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ وَضَعَهَا فِي الْحَرَامِ أَكَانَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا وِزْرٌ؟ فَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا وَضَعَهَا فِي الْحَلَالِ؛ كَانَ لَهُ أَجْرٌ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

The Wealthy and The Poor

Abū Dharr ﷺ also narrated that, “Some people from the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Messenger of Allah, the people of great wealth have gone off with the rewards. They pray as we pray, fast as we fast, and pay the *ṣadaqah* with the excess of their properties’. He said, ‘Has Allah not given you that with which you can give *ṣadaqah*? Truly, in every

glorification (tasbīḥ) there is *ṣadaqah*, in every magnification (*takbīr*) there is *ṣadaqah*, every praise is *ṣadaqah*, in every "There is no god but Allah" (*tahlīl*) there is *ṣadaqah*, in every command to the right there is *ṣadaqah*, in every forbidding of the wrong there is *ṣadaqah* and in every act of sexual intercourse by any of you there is *ṣadaqah*'. They said, 'Messenger of Allah, can one of us approach his appetite and have a reward for it?' He said, 'What do you think, if he had put it to *ḥarām* use would there not have been a wrong [written] against him? Similarly if he puts it to *ḥalāl* use there is a reward for him'." Muslim narrated it (720 and 1006).

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿmar from Abū'l-Aswad ad-Dīlī[1] from Abū Dharr ﷺ. The same meaning has been narrated from Abū Dharr in many different ways, some with extra words and some with bits left out, and we will mention some of them in the following, inshā'Allāh.

In this hadith there is a proof that because of the Companions' strong desire for right actions ﷺ and the power of their longing for good deeds they used to grieve over those good actions which were not possible for them, but which others were able to do.

The poor among them used to grieve over missing out on the ability to give *ṣadaqah* (*zakāh*) with wealth, which the wealthy were able to do. They would also grieve over staying behind from expeditions of *jihād* because of their total lack of weaponry and mounts. Allah tells us about that in them in His Book when He says:

وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّوا وَّأَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا أَلَّا يَجِدُوا مَا يُنفِقُونَ

"nor is anything held against those who, when they came to you for you to provide them with mounts and you said, 'I cannot find anything on which to mount you,' turned away with their eyes overflowing with tears, overcome by grief at having nothing to give."[2]

In this hadith there is that the poor envied the people of wealth (*duthūr*) – and *duthūr* are *amwāl* or wealth – because of the reward they obtain for giving *ṣadaqah* from their wealth, and so the Prophet ﷺ showed them acts of *ṣadaqah* that they would be able to do.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah that the poor emigrants came to

the Prophet ﷺ and said, “The people of great wealth have gone off with the high ranks and the abiding bliss.” He said, “What is that?” They said, “They pray as we pray. They fast as we fast. They give *ṣadaqah* (*zakāh*) but we do not give *ṣadaqah*. They free slaves but we do not free slaves.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, “Shall I not teach you something by which you will overtake those who were before you, and by which you will outstrip those who come after you, and by which no one will be better than you except those who do the like of what you do?” They replied, “Certainly, Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Say, ‘*Subḥāna’llāh* – Glory be to Allah, *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater, *al-ḥamdu lillāh* – praise belongs to Allah,’ thirty-three times after each prayer.” Abū Ṣāliḥ said, “So the poor emigrants returned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, ‘Our brothers, the people of wealth and property, heard about what we were doing, and they are doing the like of it.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ

‘That is the unbounded favour of Allah which He gives to whomever He wills.’[3]”[4]

Similar hadith are narrated of a whole body of the Companions, among them ʿAlī, Abū Dharr, Abū’d-Dardā’, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās and others.

The meaning of it is that the poor thought that the only way to give *ṣadaqah* is with property and wealth which they were not able to do. So the Prophet ﷺ told them that all the varieties of well-recognised virtues and good action are types of *ṣadaqah*. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Ḥudhayfah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Every well-recognised virtue (*maʿrūf*) is an act of *ṣadaqah*.”[5] Al-Bukhārī narrated it as a hadith of Jābir from the Prophet ﷺ.[6] *Ṣadaqah* is used unqualifiedly for all types of well recognised virtue and good actions, even to the point that the bounty of Allah which comes from Him to His slaves is an act of *ṣadaqah* from Him to them. One of the right-acting first generations used to reject that and say, “*Ṣadaqah* is only in the case of someone who wishes for its recompense and its reward.” But the correct position is different from that. The Prophet ﷺ said about shortening the prayer [to two *rakʿahs*] on a journey, “It is a *ṣadaqah* which Allah gives you, so accept His

ṣadaqah." Muslim narrated it.[7] He said, "Whoever has some prayer which he does at night and then sleep overcomes him and he sleeps through it, Allah will record the reward of his prayer and his sleep is a *ṣadaqah* from Allah which He gives him." An-Nasā'ī and others narrated it in a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah,[8] and Ibn Mājah narrated it in a hadith of Abū'd-Dardā'.[9]

In the two *Musnad* books of Baqī ibn Mukhallad and al-Bazzār there is the *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Dharr, "Every day, every night and every hour Allah has a *ṣadaqah* which He grants to whomever He wishes of His slaves. Allah grants no gift to His slave comparable to His inspiring him to remember Him."[10]

Khālid ibn Maʿdān said, "Allah gives *ṣadaqah* every day, and Allah grants none of His creation a better *ṣadaqah* than when He gives them the *ṣadaqah* of His remembrance."

There are two types of *ṣadaqah* from something other than property:

First, that in which there is treating people well, so that it is a *ṣadaqah* towards them, and this is often better than *ṣadaqah* with property. This is commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, because that is a way of calling [others] to

obedience to Allah and restraint from disobeying Him. That is better than benefiting [others] with property. Similarly there is teaching useful knowledge and how to recite the Qur'ān, removing harm from the pathway, working to do things of benefit to people and to prevent harm reaching them. Similarly, there is supplicating on behalf of the Muslims and seeking forgiveness for them.

Ibn Mardawiyyah narrated, with a chain of transmission in which there is some weakness, from Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever has property, let him give *ṣadaqah* from his property. Whoever has strength, then let him give *ṣadaqah* of his strength. Whoever has knowledge, then let him give *ṣadaqah* from his knowledge." But it is more likely that it is a *mawqūf* statement.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with a chain of transmission in which there is some weakness from Samurah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best of *ṣadaqah* is the tongue." Someone asked, "Messenger of Allah, what is the *ṣadaqah* of the tongue?" He answered, "Intercession by which you secure the release of a prisoner, prevent the spilling of blood, attract benefit

and good for your brother, and protect him from disliked things."[11]

ʿAmr ibn Dīnār said, "It has reached us that Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'There is no *ṣadaqah* more beloved to Allah than words. Have you not listened to the saying of Allah, exalted is He:

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى

"Correct and courteous words accompanied by forgiveness are better than *ṣadaqah* followed by insulting words."[12]?'" Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated it.[13]

Among the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan from the Prophet ﷺ there is, "A part of *ṣadaqah* is that you should greet people with a cheerful face." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it.

Muʿādh said, "Teaching knowledge to someone who does not know is *ṣadaqah*," and it has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith.[14]

Among the types of *ṣadaqah* there is keeping harm away from people. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that Abū Dharr said, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, what are the best actions?' He answered, '*Īmān* and *jihād* in His way.' I asked, 'Which are the best slaves [to free]?'

He replied, ‘Those who are most precious to their families and who have the highest prices.’ I asked, ‘And if I don’t do it?’ He answered, ‘Help by working with your hands and make something for a clumsy unhandy person.’ I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what do you think if I am too weak for some deeds?’ He replied, ‘Withhold your mischief from people, because that is a *ṣadaqah*.’”[15]

There are other additional pieces of material that are narrated in the hadith of Abū Dharr. At-Tirmidhī narrated in the hadith of Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Your smiling in the face of your brother is a *ṣadaqah* for you. Your commanding what is right and your forbidding what is wrong is a *ṣadaqah*. Your guiding a man in a land in which he has gone astray is a *ṣadaqah* for you. Your removing a stone, a thorn, and a bone from the path is a *ṣadaqah* for you. Pouring water from your well-bucket into your brother’s well-bucket is a *ṣadaqah* for you.”[16]

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the hadith of Abū Dharr that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Every breath of the son of Ādam has a *ṣadaqah* due on it every day on which the sun rises.” Someone asked, “Messenger of Allah, where are we to get the *ṣadaqah*

to give?" He replied, "There are many doors to good: *tasbīḥ*, *takbīr*, praise, laa ilaha illa'llah, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, removing some harm from the path, helping the deaf to understand [literally 'hear'], guiding the blind, showing one who asks directions the way to what he wants, hurrying with the strength of your legs to the grieving one who seeks help, carrying for the weak person with the strength of your arms. All of these are *ṣadaqah* from you for yourself."[17]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith that Abū Dharr said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, the wealthy have gone off with the reward: they give *ṣadaqah* and we do not give *ṣadaqah*.' He said, 'There is *ṣadaqah* in you: lifting a bone from the path is *ṣadaqah*, guiding someone on the way is *ṣadaqah*, helping the weak with your surplus energy is *ṣadaqah*, explaining things on behalf of the incoherent person is a *ṣadaqah*, and making love to your wife is a *ṣadaqah*.' I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, we approach our appetite and we are rewarded?!' He replied, 'Don't you realise? if you put it in that which is *ḥarām*, would you be guilty of wrong?'" He said, "I said,'Yes.' He said, 'Then do you

anticipate being paid back for evil, but you do not anticipate being repaid for good?'"[18]

In another version, the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are many acts of *ṣadaqah* in you," and he mentioned the superiority of your hearing and the superiority of your sight. In another version from Imam Aḥmad, there is that he said, "Some of the categories of *ṣadaqah* are *takbīr*, *subḥāna'llāh* – Glory be to Allah, *al-ḥamdu lillāh* – praise belongs to Allah, *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah, and *astaghfiru'llāh* – I seek forgiveness of Allah, and that you command what is right and forbid what is wrong, you remove thorns, bones and stones from people's path, guide the blind, and help the deaf and dumb to understand, show those who ask to be shown the way to what they want if you know where it is, hurrying with the strength of your legs to the grieving one who seeks help, lifting with the strength of your arms along with someone who is weak. All of those are categories of *ṣadaqah* from you for yourself, and there is a reward for you for making love to your wife." I asked, "How can there be a reward for me in my appetite?" So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, "Have you thought about if you have a child who grows up and from whom you hope for

good, and then he dies, would you not anticipate to be rewarded for him?" I answered, "Yes." He asked, "So did you then create him?" I said, "Rather, Allah created him?" He asked, "Did you guide him?" I replied, "Rather, Allah guided him." He asked, "Then did you use to provide for him?" I answered, "Rather, Allah used to provide him." He said, "Similarly then, put it to *ḥalāl* use and avoid putting it to *ḥarām* use, and then if Allah wills He will make it [the ovum] live, and if He wills He will make it die, and you have a reward."[19]

The apparent meaning of this requires that one is rewarded for making love to one's wife with the intention of seeking a child in consequence of which there is a reward for raising and instructing him, teaching him courtesy during his life, and anticipating a reward for him if he dies. Otherwise, if one does not anticipate anything in fulfilling one's appetite, then people disagree as to whether this hadith applies to that situation.

There is an authentic hadith that a man's expenditure on his family is an act of *ṣadaqah*. In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is from Abū Masʿūd al-Anṣārī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A man's expenditure upon

his family is a *ṣadaqah*." In a version of Muslim's there is, "When he anticipates a reward for it." In a wording of alBukhārī there is, "If the man spends on his family while anticipating a reward for it, then it is a *ṣadaqah* for him."[20] So it shows that one is only rewarded for it when he anticpates a reward for it from Allah as is in the hadith of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If you spend any expenditure seeking by it the face of Allah you will always be rewarded for it even for the morsel of food which you raise to your wife's mouth." They both narrated it.[21]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best dīnār is one which a man spends on his dependents, and a dīnār which he spends on his horse in the way of Allah, and a dīnār which a man spends on his companions in the way of Allah."[22] Abū Qilābah said when narrating this hadith, "He began with dependants, and which man has more reward than one who spends on his little dependants [something] by which Allah gives them abstinence [from begging] and by which Allah gives them independence [of others]."

There is also in it from Saʿd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Certainly, your expenditure on your dependants

is *ṣadaqah*, and what your wife eats of your property is *ṣadaqah*."[23] This has been narrated in another version as being conditional on seeking the face of Allah. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Of the dīnār which you spend in the way of Allah, the dīnār which you spend on a slave, the dīnār which you give as *ṣadaqah* to someone who is bereft, and the dīnār which you spend on your family, the best of them is the dīnār which you spend on your family."[24]

Imam Aḥmad, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated the hadith that Abū Hurayrah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Give *ṣadaqah*!' A man said, 'I have a dīnār.' He said, 'Spend it as a *ṣadaqah* upon yourself.' He said, 'I have another dīnār.' He said, 'Spend it as a *ṣadaqah* on your wife.' He said, 'I have another dīnār.' He said, 'Spend it as *ṣadaqah* on your children.' He said, 'I have another dīnār.' He said, 'Spend it as a *ṣadaqah* on your servant." He said, 'I have another dīnār.' He said, 'You have more insight [on whom to spend it].'"[25]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of al-Miqdām ibn Maʿdīkarib that the Prophet ﷺ said, "That which you feed yourself is a *ṣadaqah* for you. That which you feed

your child is a *ṣadaqah* for you. That which you feed your wife is a *ṣadaqah* for you. That which you feed your servant is a *ṣadaqah* for you."[26] There are many hadith in this same sense which would be too lengthy to mention.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every Muslim who plants [trees and bushes] and who cultivates crops, and then people, birds and animals eat from them, it is a *ṣadaqah* for him."[27]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every Muslim who plants [trees and bushes], then whatever is eaten from them is a *ṣadaqah* for him, and whatever is stolen from them is a *ṣadaqah* for him, and whatever wild animals eat from them is a *ṣadaqah* for him, and what the birds eat from them is a *ṣadaqah* for him, and if anyone obtains any good from them it is a *ṣadaqah* for him." There is in another version, "...and then people eat from it, or animals or birds but that it is a *ṣadaqah* for him until the Day of Rising."[28]

There is in the *Musnad* with a weak chain of transmission from Muʿādh ibn Anas al-Juhanī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever builds a building without

wronging [anyone] nor aggression, or plants trees without wronging anyone nor aggression, then it will be a continuing reward for him as long as anyone of the All-Merciful's creation benefits from it."[29]

Al-Bukhārī mentioned in his *Ta'rīkh* the *marfūᶜ* hadith of Jābir, "Whoever digs water, then whatever thirsty liver of jinn or human beings or wild animals or birds drinks from it, Allah will reward him for it on the Day of Rising."[30]

The apparent meaning of all these hadith shows that these things will be acts of *ṣadaqah* for which the cultivator and planter will be rewarded without having intended or purposed it. Similarly, the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "What do you think, if he had put it to *ḥarām* use would there not have been a wrong [written] against him? Similarly if he puts it to *ḥalāl* use there is a reward for him," shows by its apparent outward meaning that he is rewarded for going to his wife [to make love] without having an intention, because the one who makes love to his wife is similar to the cultivator of land who tills his land and sows seed in it. A party of the people of knowledge took this position, and Abū Muḥammad ibn Qutaybah inclined to that view with respect to eating, drinking and

sexual intercourse, which he sought to show by means of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "The *mu'min* is rewarded for everything even the morsel of food which he raises to his mouth." This wording which he uses for his proof is not very well known, and what is well known is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ to Saʿd, "If you spend some expenditure seeking by it the face of Allah you will be rewarded for it, even the morsel of food which you lift to your wife's mouth." Here it is qualified by an intention which is purely for the sake of Allah. So the unqualified hadith are then to be interpreted according to it, and Allah knows best.

Something that also shows this is the saying of Allah ﷻ:

لَّا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward."[31] So He makes that a good action upon which a reward is only consequent if there is a pure intention. As for if someone does it

showing off, then he will be punished for it. The only place for some hesitation is in the case of someone who does that with neither a pure nor a corrupt intention. Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said, "Whoever does a good act without an intention then it is sufficient for him that he has chosen Islam over all other *dīns*."[32] The apparent meaning here is that in general he will be rewarded even though he has no intention, since by his entering into Islam he has in general chosen good actions and so he will be rewarded for every action he does because of that intention, and Allah knows best.

His saying, "What do you think, if he had put it to *ḥarām* use would there not have been a wrong [written] against him? Similarly if he puts it to *ḥalāl* use there is a reward for him," is known by the people who study the *uṣūl* (sources or principles) as an analogical deduction from the contrary, an example of which is the saying of Ibn Masʿūd that, "The Prophet ﷺ said something and I said something else. He said, 'Whoever dies associating anything with Allah will enter the Fire,' and I say, 'Whoever dies not associating anything with Allah will enter the Garden.'"[33]

The second type of *ṣadaqah* which is not from material wealth is that whose benefit is confined to the one who does it, such as the different types of remembrance (*dhikr*) such as *takbīr*, glorification, praise, and *lā ilāha illa'llāh*, and seeking forgiveness. Similarly, there is walking to the mosque which is a *ṣadaqah*. It is not mentioned in any of the hadith that the prayer, the fast, Ḥajj, and *jihād* are *ṣadaqah*, and most of these actions are better than *ṣadaqah* with material wealth, because that is only mentioned as a response to the poor and needy ones who asked about that which could stand as a replacement for the optional acts of the wealthy people with their wealth. As for the obligatory actions, all of them participated and shared in them.

There are many texts which show the superiority of *dhikr* to material *ṣadaqah* and other acts, as in the hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Shall I not tell you the best of your deeds, those that give you the highest rank, and those that are the purest with your King, and are better for you than giving gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks and they striking your necks?" They said, "Of course," He said,

“Remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah ﷻ.”[34] Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and Mālik – in the *Muwaṭṭa’* – narrated it, [but Mālik narrated it] as a *mawqūf statement* which stops short at Abū’d-Dardā’.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says:

لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

‘There is no god but Allah alone without partner. His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He gives life and He gives death. And He is able to do all things,’ one hundred times a day, it will protect him from *shayṭān* for that day until the evening, and no one will bring anything better than what he has done except for someone who does more than that.”[35]

There is also in them from Abū Ayyūb that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says it [the above-mentioned *dhikr*] ten times is like someone who has freed four people of the descendants of Ismāʿīl [from slavery].”[36]

Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that, “The Prophet ﷺ was asked, ‘Which of the slaves have the best rank with Allah on the Day of

Rising.' He replied, 'Those who remember Allah a great deal.' I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, [greater] than the one who fights in the way of Allah?' He said, 'Even if he struck the *kuffār* and those who associate partners [with Allah] with his sword until it broke and it was coloured with blood, yet the ones who remember Allah would be better than him in rank.'"[37] The like of it is narrated in a hadith of Muʿādh and of Jābir as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but the correct position is that it [that version] is something which stops short at Muʿādh as his own saying.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of Abū'l-Wāziʿ from Abū Burdah from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Even if there were one man with dirhams in his care which he was apportioning out, and another remembering Allah, the one who remembers Allah is always better."[38] I say that the authentic position is that it is from Abū'l-Wāziʿ from Abū Barzah al-Aslamī from his own saying. Jaʿfar al-Firyābī narrated it.

He also narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater – one hundred times, and *subḥāna'llāh* – glorious is Allah – one hundred times, and says *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah – one hundred times, then it

is better for him than ten slaves whom he sets free, and better than seven she-camels which he sacrifices."

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission from Abū'd-Dardā' that someone said to him, "A man has set free one hundred people," and so he said, "One hundred people is a great part of a man's property, but better than that is *īmān* which is steadfast night and day and that the tongue of any of you should remain moist from *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ."

There is also from Abū'd-Dardā', "That I should say, '*Allāhu akbar*' one hundred times is more beloved to me than that I should give one hundred dinars as *ṣadaqah*." Salmān al-Fārisī and others of the Companions and the Followers said similarly, "Dhikr is better than *ṣadaqah* with the same number of possessions."

Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith of Umm Hāni' that the Prophet ﷺ said to her, "Glorify Allah [by saying *subḥāna'llāh*] one hundred times because it is equal to [setting free] one hundred slaves from the descendants of Ismāʿīl. Praise Allah one hundred times because it is equal for you to one hundred saddled and bridled horses on which you mount [fighters] in the way of Allah. Magnify Allah

[by saying *Allāhu akbar*] one hundred times because it will be equal for you to one hundred accepted she-camels with garlands [as worn by sacrificial camels at Ḥajj] and say *'lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah' one hundred times," I think that he said, "it will fill what is between heaven and earth. There will not be raised up for anyone on that day the like of your action unless he does the like of what you have done."[39] Aḥmad also narrated it and Ibn Mājah, and their wording was, "And say, *'lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah' one hundred times; it will not leave a wrong action and no action outstrips it."[40]

At-Tirmidhī narrated it from a hadith of ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather from the Prophet ﷺ in a similar sense.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "No *ṣadaqah* is better than *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ."[41]

Al-Firyābī narrated with a chain of transmission about which there are some views from Abū Umāmah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever misses struggling patiently with the night, and is too mean to spend his wealth, and is too cowardly to fight the enemy, then let him say a great deal, 'subḥāna'llāh wa biḥamdihi –

Glory be to Allah and in His praise,' because it is more beloved to Allah ﷻ than a mountain of gold or a mountain of silver which he spends in the way of Allah ﷻ."[42] Al-Bazzār narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith with a chain of transmission close to that of the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, and he said in his hadith, "Let him do a great deal of *dhikr* of Allah," and he did not add to that. In this same sense there are many other hadith.

1 Another copy of the text has ad-Daylamī. It would appear that he is Abu'l-Aswad adDu'alī the companion of Sayyidunā ʿAlī ﷺ. to whom he entrusted the task of writing the first Arabic grammar. Trans.

2 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 93

3 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 54

4 Al-Bukhārī (843), Muslim (595)

5 Muslim (1005)

6 Al-Bukhārī (6021)

7 Muslim (686)

8 Abū Dāwūd (1314), Aḥmad (6:180), an-Nasā'ī and Mālik

9 An-Nasā'ī ((3:258), Ibn Mājah (344)

10 Al-Bazzār (694)

11 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (6962)

12 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 263

13 Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr* (1:325)

14 Ibn Mājah (243)

15 Al-Bukhārī (2518), Muslim (84)

16 At-Tirmidhī (1956)

17 Ibn Ḥibbān (3377)

18 Aḥmad (5:154)

19 Aḥmad (5:168, 169)

20 Al-Bukhārī (55), Muslim (1002)

21 Al-Bukhārī (56), Muslim (1628)

22 Muslim (995)

23 Muslim (1628)

24 Muslim (995)

25 Aḥmad (2:251), Ibn Ḥibbān (3337)

26 Aḥmad (4:131)

27 Al-Bukhārī (232), Muslim (1553)

28 Muslim (1552)

29 Aḥmad (3:438)

30 Al-Bukhārī in *at-Ta'rīkh al-kabīr* (1:1:332)

31 Sūrat an-Nisā': 114

32 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*.

33 Al-Bukhārī (1238), Muslim (94), and others

34 Aḥmad (5:195), at-Tirmidhī (3377), Ibn Mājah (3790)

35 Al-Bukhārī (3293), Muslim (2691)

36 Al-Bukhārī (6404), Muslim (2693)

37 Aḥmad (3:75), at-Tirmidhī (3376), and others

38 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (5969) as mentioned by al-Haythamī in *al-Majmaʿ* (10:74)

39 Aḥmad (6:344), an-Nasā'ī (844) in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah*, and others

40 Ibn Mājah (3810), Aḥmad (6:344)

41 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (7414)

42 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7877)

الحديث السادس والعشرون

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿كُلُّ سُلامَى مِنَ النَّاسِ عَلَيْهِ صَدَقَةٌ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ تَطْلُعُ فِيهِ الشَّمْسُ، تَعْدِلُ بَيْنَ الإِثْنَيْنِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتُعِينُ الرَّجُلَ فِي دَابَّتِهِ، فَتَحْمِلُهُ عَلَيْهَا أَوْ تَرْفَعُ لَهُ عَلَيْهَا مَتَاعَهُ صَدَقَةٌ، وَالْكَلِمَةُ الطَّيِّبَةُ صَدَقَةٌ، وَبِكُلِّ خُطْوَةٍ تَمْشِيهَا إِلَى الصَّلاةِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتُمِيطُ الأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ صَدَقَةٌ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Ṣadaqah

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Every sulāmā [bone] of every person owes *ṣadaqah* each day in which the sun rises. To exercise justice between two people is *ṣadaqah*, to help a man with his beast so that you help him to mount it, or lift his goods up to him when he is on it is *ṣadaqah*, a good word is *ṣadaqah*, every step with which you walk to prayer [in the mosque] is *ṣadaqah*, and to remove some harm from the road is *ṣadaqah*.'" Al-Bukhārī ([2707], [2891] and [2989]) and Muslim (1009) narrated it.

The two of them narrated this hadith in the version of Hammām ibn Munabbih from Abū Hurayrah. Al-Bazzār narrated it in the version of Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The human being comprises three hundred and sixty bones, or thirty-six *sulāmā* [the bones of the hands and feet] upon each of which every day a *ṣadaqah* is due.” They asked, “What about someone who has nothing?” He replied, “Let him command the right and forbid the wrong.” They asked, “What about someone who is not able?” He replied, “Let him lift a bone from the path.” They asked, “What about someone who is not able?” He answered, “Let him help someone who is weak.” They asked, “What about someone who is not able to do that?” He replied, “Let him desist from harming people.”[1]

Muslim narrated the hadith of ʿĀ’ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The son of Ādam was created with three hundred and sixty joints. Whoever remembers Allah, praises Allah, declares *lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god but Allah, glorifies Allah, removes a stone from the Muslims’ path, or removes thorns, or removes a bone, or commands what is right, or forbids what is wrong according to the number of those three hundred

and sixty bones will enter into that day's evening having removed himself from the Fire."[2]

Muslim also narrated in a version of Abū'l-Aswad ad-Du'alī from Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "In the morning there is a *ṣadaqah* due on every bone of each one of you. Every glorification is a *ṣadaqah*, every act of praise is a *ṣadaqah*, every *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah is a *ṣadaqah*, and every *takbīr* is a *ṣadaqah*. Every command to do the right is a *ṣadaqah*, and forbidding the wrong is a *ṣadaqah*. What will take the place of that is two *rakʿahs* which one prays at ḍuḥā.[3]"

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Buraydah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are three hundred and sixty joints in the human being, and he must give *ṣadaqah* for every joint of his." They asked, "Who is able to do that, Prophet of Allah?" He replied, "The mucus in the mosque which you bury, and the thing which you put to the side of the path [are *ṣadaqah*], but if you do not find [such things], then two *rakʿahs* of forenoon will suffice."[4]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is *ṣadaqah* due from every Muslim." They asked, "What if he finds nothing

[to give]?" He replied, "Then let him work with his hands, benefit himself and give *ṣadaqah*." They asked, "What if he isnotable, or he does not do it?" He answered, "Then let him help someone troubled who is in need." They asked, "And if he does not do that?" He replied, "Let him command the good," or he said, "what is right." They asked, "And if he does not do that?" He answered, "Then let him withhold himself from doing wrong, because that will be a *ṣadaqah* for him."[5]

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "From each joint of the son of Ādam there is due a *ṣadaqah* every day." A man among the people asked, "Who is able to do this?" He replied, "Commanding what is right is a *ṣadaqah*, forbidding what is wrong is a *ṣadaqah*, carrying something for a weak person is a *ṣadaqah*, and every step which any of you takes to the prayer is a *ṣadaqah*."[6] Al-Bazzār and others narrated it.

In another version, "From every mark on the human being there is due a *ṣadaqah* every day or a *ṣalāh*." A man said, "This is one of the most difficult things you have brought us." So he said, "Commanding the right and forbidding the wrong are

a *ṣalāh* or a *ṣadaqah*. Your carrying something for a weak person is a *ṣalāh*. Your removing some dirt from the path is a *ṣalāh*. Every step you take to the *ṣalāh* is a *ṣalāh*." In the version of al-Bazzār there is, "Your removal of some harm from the path is a *ṣadaqah*," or he said, "a *ṣalāh*."

One said, "He meant by 'mark (*mīsam*)' every limb by itself, and it is derived from *wasm* which is a mark, since every bone, vein and artery, and tendon has the mark of the workmanship of Allah on it, so then it is obligatory for the slave to show gratitude for that to Allah and to praise Him for his being created symmetrically and in good health and well-being. This is what is meant by his saying, "A *ṣalāh* is due from it every day," because the *ṣalāh* comprises praise, and gratitude.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated in another way from Ibn ʿAbbās with his ascribing the hadith to the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "On every bone, or on every limb of the descendants of Ādam every day there is due a *ṣadaqah*. Two *rakʿahs* at forenoon will suffice that."[7]

It is narrated in a hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "On every self every day there is due *ṣadaqah*." Someone asked, "So what if one does not

find anything [to give]?" He said, "Is one not with full sight, sturdy, eloquent, and healthy?" He replied, "Of course." He said, "Let him give from that of which he has little and from that of which he has much. Your sight, for the one whose sight is defective, is a *ṣadaqah*, and your hearing, for the one whose hearing is defective, is a *ṣadaqah*."

We have seen in the explanation of the past hadith, the hadith of Abū Dharr, that which Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every breath of the son of Ādam has a *ṣadaqah* due on it every day on which the sun rises." Someone asked, "Messenger of Allah, where are we to get the *ṣadaqah* to give?" He replied, "There are many doors to good: tasbīḥ, takbīr, praise, *lā ilāha illa'llāh*, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, removing some harm from the path, helping the deaf to understand [literally 'hear'], guiding the blind, showing one who asks directions the way to what he wants, hurrying with the strength of your legs to the grieving one who seeks help, carrying for the weak person with the strength of your arms. All of these are *ṣadaqah* from you for yourself."

About his saying ﷺ, “Every bone [*sulāmā*] of every person owes *ṣadaqah*,” Abū ʿUbayd said, “*Sulāmā* originally is a bone which is in the hoof of the camel.” He said, “So it is as if the meaning of the hadith is that on every single bone of the son of Ādam there is due a *ṣadaqah*.” Abū ʿUbayd indicates that the *sulāmā* is a name for one of the small bones in the camel and that then later it is used to express the sense of bones in general with respect to human beings and others. So the meaning of the hadith according to him is that a *ṣadaqah* is due on every single bone of the son of Ādam.

Others say that *sulāmā* are bones in the extremities of the hand and foot, which is used to allude to all the bones of the body. *Sulāmā* is a plural but some say that it is a singular.

The people knowledgeable in medicine say that the bones of the body comprise in total two hundred and forty eight bones apart from the simsimāniyyāt [the light small bones]. Some of them say that there are three hundred and sixty bones of which two hundred and sixty-five are apparent to the senses, and the rest of which are small and are not apparent and these are called simsimāniyyāt. These hadith confirm this

statement. Perhaps *sulāmā* is used to allude to these small bones, just as it is originally a noun for the smallest bones in the camel. The version of al-Bazzār of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah bears witness to this, where he says, “Or thirty-six *sulāmā*.” Other people than al-Bazzār narrated it and said about it, “There are six hundred and sixty bones in the son of Ādam,” but this narration is incorrect. There is in ʿĀ’ishah’s hadith and that of Buraydah mention that there are three hundred and sixty joints.

The meaning of the hadith is that the structure and organisation of these bones and their safety is one of the greatest blessings that Allah grants His slave, so that every bone demands that the son of Ādam gives a *ṣadaqah* on behalf of it, so that it will be an expression of gratitude for this blessing. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ

“O man! what has deluded you in respect of your Noble Lord? He Who created you and formed you and proportioned you and assembled you in whatever way He willed.”[8] And He says ﷻ:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلاً مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ

"Say: 'It is He who brought you into being and gave you hearing, sight and hearts. What little thanks you show!'"[9] He says:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَارَ وَالأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs knowing nothing at all, and gave you hearing, sight and hearts so that perhaps you would show thanks."[10] He says:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُ عَيْنَيْنِ وَلِسَاناً وَشَفَتَيْنِ

"Have We not given him two eyes, and a tongue and two lips?"[11] Mujāhid said, "These blessings of Allah support one another, and He makes you acknowledge them so that you will show gratitude." Al-Fuḍayl recited this *āyah* one night and wept, and someone asked him about his weeping. He answered, "Have you spent a night thanking Allah for giving you two eyes with which you see? Have you spent a night

thanking Allah for giving you a tongue with which you can speak?" and he continued enumerating in this manner.

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission that Salmān al-Fārisī said, "A man was given much of the world and then what he owned was taken away. So he began to praise and extol Allah ﷻ to the point that he no longer had a bed except for a mat woven of reeds or palm-leaves, but he continued to praise and extol Allah ﷻ. Another man was given much of the world and he said to the owner of the reed-mat, 'Have you thought about what you are praising Allah for u?' He said, 'I praise Allah for that which even if I were to be given in exchange for it what all the creation have been given, I would not give them it.' He asked, 'What is that?' He answered, 'Have you not thought about your sight? Have you not thought about your tongue? Have you not thought about your hands? Have you not thought about your feet?'"[12]

It is transmitted with his chain of transmission from Abū'd-Dardā' that he used to say, "Health is the body's wealth."[13]

Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd said that a man complained to him of the constricted state he was experiencing, and Yūnus asked him, “Would you be pleased to be given one hundred thousand dirhams for the sight with which you see?” The man replied, “No.” He asked, “Then one hundred thousand dirhams for your hand?” He answered, “No.” He asked, “Then for your feet?” He said, “No.” He reminded him of Allah’s blessings which He had given him. Then Yūnus said, “I see that you have hundreds of thousands and you complain about your needs!”[14]

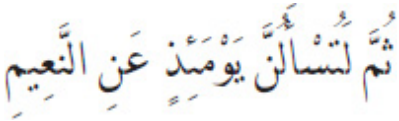
Wahb ibn Munabbih said, “It is written in the wisdom of the family of Dāwūd, ‘Health and well-being are the hidden kingdom.’”

Bakr al-Muzanī said, “Son of Ādam, if you want to know the measure of that with which Allah has blessed you, then shut your eyes!”[15] In one tradition there is, “How many a blessing of Allah there is in a tranquil natural disposition.”[16]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are two blessings of which many people are cheated: health and leisure.”[17]

These blessings are some of those gratitude for which man will be asked about on the Day of Rising,

and what is due from him because of them will be demanded from him as He says, exalted is He:



“Then you will be asked that Day about the pleasures you enjoyed.”[18]

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Ḥibbān narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The first blessing about which the slave will be asked on the Day of Rising is when He says to him, ‘Did We not make your body healthy and give you cool water to drink?’”[19]

Ibn Masʿūd said, “Pleasure is security and health.”[20] It has also been narrated from him as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated that Ibn ʿAbbās said about His words, “Then you will be asked that Day about the pleasures you enjoyed,”[21] “Pleasure is health of the body, hearing and sight. Allah will ask the slaves in what way they employed them, and He knows that better than them. That is His words, exalted is He, ‘Hearing, sight and hearts will all be asked about.’[22]”

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated from Ayyūb ibn ʿUtbah, in whom there is some weakness, from ʿAṭā' from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says, '*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah,' because of it he will have a covenant with Allah. Whoever says, '*Subḥāna'llāh wa bi hamdihi* – Glory be to Allah and in His praise,' because of it Allah will record for him one hundred and twenty-four thousand good actions." A man asked, "How can we be destroyed after this, Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "A man will come on the Day of Rising with an action which even if it were placed on a mountain it would be too heavy for it, and then one of the blessings of Allah will stand and it will almost consume all of that, unless Allah looks down upon him with His mercy."[23]

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated with a chain of transmission in which there is also some weakness from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The blessings will be brought on the Day of Rising, and the good and wrong actions, and Allah will say to one of His blessings, 'Take your due from his good actions,' and it will not leave him a good action without going off with it."[24]

[Also] with his chain of transmission, there is in a narration from Wahb ibn Munabbih that he said. “A worshipper served Allah for fifty years, and then Allah ﷻ revealed to him, ‘I have forgiven you.’ He asked, ‘Lord, what have You forgiven me, when I have not done anything wrong?’ So Allah ﷻ gave permission to a vein in his neck and it throbbed and ached violently, so that he did not sleep and he did not pray. Then later it became still and he stood in prayer. An angel came to him, and he complained to him of the pain he had experienced from the throbbing of his vein, and the angel said, ‘Your Lord ﷻ says, “Your worship of fifty years is equal to the stillness of that vein.”’”[25]

Al-Ḥākim narrated this same sense in a *marfūʿ* hadith in a version of Sulaymān ibn Harm al-Qurashī from Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir from Jābir from the Prophet ﷺ that Jibrīl told him that a slave worshipped Allah on top of a mountain out in the ocean for five hundred years, and then later he asked his Lord to take his soul while he was in prostration. He said, “So we passed by him when we descended [to the earth] and when we ascended [to the heavens]. We find in knowledge that he will be raised up on the Day of Rising and made to stand before Allah ﷻ and that the

Lord ﷻ will say, ‘My worshipper, enter the Garden by My mercy.’ Then that worshipper will say, ‘My Lord, by my deeds!’ three times. Then Allah will say to the angels, ‘Weigh My blessings to My worshipper against his deeds.’ They will find that the blessing of sight alone will encompass the worship of five hundred years, and yet there will still remain the blessings of the body, so He will say, ‘Enter My worshipper in the Fire,’ and so they will drag him to the Fire. Then he will cry out to his Lord, ‘By Your mercy enter me into the Garden, by Your mercy!’ So He will make him enter the Garden.” Jibrīl said, “Things are only by the mercy of Allah, Muḥammad.” Al-ʿUqaylī said about Sulaymān ibn Harm, “He is unknown and his hadith are not to be committed to memory.”

Al-Kharā’iṭī narrated with a chain of transmission about which there are some views, from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr as a *marfūʿ* hadith, “The slave will be brought on the Day of Rising and made to stand before Allah ﷻ Who will say to the angels, ‘Have a look at My slave’s actions and My blessings to him.’ They will look and will say, ‘Not even by the amount of one of Your blessings to him.’ So He will say, ‘Look into his actions both bad and good.’ They will look and they will find

them balancing each other exactly. He will say, ‘My slave, I accept your good actions, I forgive your wrong actions, and in the meantime I give you My blessings as a gift.’”[26]

What is meant is that Allah, exalted is He, gives blessings to His slaves to the extent that they cannot count, as He says:

“If you tried to number Allah’s blessings, you could never count them,”[27] and He seeks gratitude from them and is pleased with that from them. Sulaymān at-Taymī said, “Allah blesses His slaves according to His capacity and imposes upon them that they must be grateful according to their capacities, so much so that He is contented with them for gratitude shown as their hearts’ acknowledgement of His blessings, and with their tongues’ praise for them,” as Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā’ī narrated in the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Ghannām that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says in the morning:

اَللَّهُمَّ مَا أَصْبَحَ بِي مِن نِّعْمَةٍ أَوْ بِأَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ فَمِنكَ وَحْدَكَ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ، وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ

'Whatever blessing I or anyone of Your creatures attain in the morning is from You alone without any partner to You, and so Your's is the praise and Your's is the thanks,' has then paid the thanks due on him for that day. Whoever says it when he enters the evening has paid the gratitude due on him that night."[28] In the version of an-Nasā'ī it is from ʿAbdullāh Ibn ʿAbbās.

Al-Ḥākim narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every blessing which Allah bestows on a slave, and so he knows that it is from Allah, Allah records that he has shown gratitude for it before he expresses gratitude. Every wrong action the slave does which he regrets, Allah records His forgiveness [of him] before he seeks His forgiveness."[29]

Abū ʿAmr ash-Shaybānī said, "Mūsā عليه السلام said upon the day of at-Tur, 'My Lord, if I pray, it comes from You. If I give *ṣadaqah*, it comes from You. If I convey Your message, it comes from You. How can I thank You?' He said, 'Now, you have thanked Me.'"[30]

Al-Ḥasan said, "Mūsā عليه السلام said, 'My Lord, how could Ādam be able to show gratitude for that which

You did for him? You created him with Your hand, You breathed into him Your *rūḥ*, You made him reside in Your Garden, and You told the angels to prostrate to him.' He said, 'Mūsā, he knew that that was from Me, and He praised Me for it, and that was gratitude for that which I did.'"[31]

Abū'l-Jild said, "I read in the questions of Dāwūd that he said, 'O my Lord, how can I thank You when I can only reach to thank You through Your blessing?'" He said, "So the revelation came to him, 'Dāwūd! do you not know that the blessings you have are from Me?' He said, 'Of course, my Lord.' He said, 'Then I am contented with that as thanks from you.'"[32]

He said, "I read in the questions of Mūsā, 'My Lord, how can I thank You when the least of Your blessings which You have placed with me would not be adequately recompensed by all of my actions?'" He said, "So the revelation came to him, 'Mūsā, now you have thanked Me.'"[33]

Bakr ibn ʿAbdullāh said, "A slave never says, *'Al-ḥamdu lillāh'* one time but that he has to receive a blessing for his saying, '*Al-ḥamdu lillāh*.' What is the proper response to that blessing? Its response is that he say, '*Al-ḥamdu lillāh*,' and so there will come

another blessing, and so the blessings of Allah never come to an end."[34]

Ibn Mājah narrated the *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas, "Whenever Allah sends a blessing to His slave and he says, '*Al-ḥamdu lillāh*,' then that which he gives is better than that which he takes."[35] We have also narrated the like of it from a hadith of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Asmā' bint Yazīd also as a *marfūʿ* hadith. This is also narrated as a statement of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.[36]

One of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's governors wrote to him, "I am in a land in which there are a great number of blessings, so much so that I fear for its inhabitants that they will be weak in showing gratitude." ʿUmar wrote to him, "I used to think that you knew Allah better than you apparently do. When Allah blesses a slave with some blessing and he praises Allah, his praise is better than His blessings. You would only know that from the revealed Book of Allah. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْماً وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

‘We gave knowledge to Dāwūd and Sulaymān who said, “Praise be to Allah who has favoured us over many of His slaves who are *mu’minūn*.”’[37] Allah says:

وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَراً حَتَّى إِذَا جَاؤُوهَا ... وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

‘And those who have *taqwā* of their Lord will be driven to the Garden in companies and when they arrive there,’ up until His saying, ‘They will say, “Praise be to Allah...”’ and which blessing is better than entering the Garden?”[38]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā mentioned in the *Kitāb ash-Shukr* – the Book of Gratitude, from one of the people of knowledge that he regarded this statement as correct, I mean the statement of those who say that the praise is better than the blessing. It is narrated of Ibn ʿUyaynah that he considered the person who said it to be mistaken. He said, “The action of the slave cannot be better than the action of the Lord ﷻ.”

However the right position is that of the person who regarded it as being correct, because what is meant by the blessing, is worldly blessings such as well-being, provision, health, protection from disliked things, etc. Praise is one of the blessings of the hereafter. Both are blessings from Allah, but Allah’s

blessing His slave by guiding him to show gratitude for His blessings with praise for them is better than His worldly blessings to His slave, because worldly blessings, if unaccompanied by gratitude, are a trial, as Abū Ḥāzim said, “Every blessing by which closeness is not sought to Allah is a trial.” When Allah grants His slave success in showing gratitude for His worldly blessings with praise or by some other type of gratitude, then this blessing is better than those blessings and more beloved to Allah ﷻ than are they, because Allah loves praise and is pleased with His slave to eat food and then praise Him for it, to drink and praise Him for it. Praise for blessings and showing thankfulness for them is more beloved to liberally generous people than their own wealth, because they spend generously from it seeking praise, and Allah is the Most Nobly Generous and the Most Liberally Generous of the generous. He gives His blessings freely to His slaves seeking from them appreciation for them, remembrance of them and praise for them, and He is contented with that from them as an expression of gratitude for them, and all of that is only a part of His gracious bounty to them. He does not need their gratitude, but He loves that from His slaves, since the

slave's rightness, success and perfection lie in it. A part of His bounty is that He ascribes the praise and gratitude to them even though it is one of His greatest blessings to them. This is just as if He had given them the wealth and property that He did and then asked them to loan Him some of it and then praised them for giving it, whereas all of it is His property and from His bounty, but nevertheless His noble generosity requires that. From this the meaning of the tradition which is transmitted both as a *marfūʿ* hadith and as a *mawqūf* statement is known, "Praise belongs to Allah with a praise which will pay Him in full for His blessings, and which will equal His increase."

Let us now return to explanation of the hadith, "Every *sulāmā* [bone] of every person owes *ṣadaqah* each day in which the sun rises."

It means that *ṣadaqah* is due from the son of Ādam for these members every day of the world, because 'day' can be used to express a term longer than that, as when it is said, "The Day of Ṣiffīn" which extended over some days, and it can also be used to express an unqualified period of time as in His saying:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمْ لَيْسَ مَصْرُوفاً عَنْهُمْ

“No, indeed! The day it reaches them it will not be averted from them.”[39] It may also be a day and a night. So when it is said, “each day in which the sun rises,” it is known that this *ṣadaqah* is due from the son of Ādam every day of the days of the world in which he lives. The outward meaning of the hadith shows that this gratitude with this *ṣadaqah* is obligatory for the Muslim every day. However, there are two degrees of gratitude:

First, that which is obligatory, which is that one performs the obligations and avoids those things which are forbidden. There is no escaping this degree, and it is sufficient thankfulness for these blessings. That which Abū Dāwūd narrated in the hadith of Abū’l-Aswad ad-Du’alī shows this. He said, “We were with Abū Dharr and he said, ‘In the morning of every day there is a *ṣadaqah* due on every bone. So one has with every *ṣalāh* an act of *ṣadaqah*, and fasting is *ṣadaqah*, and Ḥajj is *ṣadaqah*, glorification is *ṣadaqah*, the *takbīr* is *ṣadaqah*, praise is *ṣadaqah*. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ enumerated these right actions and said, ‘Of that two *rakʿahs* of the forenoon will suffice any of you.’”[40] We have seen previously the hadith of Abū Mūsā which is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books, “Then

if he does not do that, let him restrain himself from evil, because that is *ṣadaqah* on his part." This shows that it is sufficient for someone that he not do any evil act. One only avoids evil when one undertakes the obligatory acts and avoids forbidden acts, since the greatest evil act is to give up the obligations. It was from this that one of the right-acting first generations said, "Gratitude is giving up acts of disobedience." One of them said, "Gratitude is that one not derive support from any blessing for an act of disobedience."

Abū Ḥāzim az-Zāhid [who did without the world] mentioned the gratitude of all the limbs, and that they should be restrained from acts of disobedience and employed in acts of obedience, and then he said, "As for someone who expresses gratitude with his tongue and does not express gratitude with all his limbs and members, he is like a man who has a robe and he only takes a corner of it and does not dress in it. So that it did not help him in the heat and cold, in snow and rain."[41]

ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam said, "Let the slave consider Allah's blessings to him in his body, his hearing, sight, his hands and feet, etc. All of these things have in them blessings from Allah ﷻ. The slave

must employ the blessings which are in his body for the sake of Allah ﷻ in obedience to Him. Another blessing is one's provision. One must use the provision with which Allah has blessed one for the sake of Allah ﷻ in obedience to Him. Whoever acts in this way, has taken the wise path with respect to gratitude and he has grasped its root and branches."[42] Al-Ḥasan saw a man walking in a proud and conceited manner and he said, "There is a blessing from Allah in every one of his limbs. O Allah, do not make us of those who strengthen themselves on Your blessings for disobedience to You."

The second degree in thankfulness is the recommended degree of gratitude which is that the slave, after discharging his obligations and avoiding the forbidden things, should do extra optional acts of obedience. This is the degree of the forerunners who are brought near [to Allah], and it is this which the Prophet ﷺ directed the way to in the aforementioned hadith. It was in that way that the Prophet ﷺ used to strive and exert himself in *ṣalāh*, and stand so long that his feet split, so that when someone said to him, "Do you do this, when Allah has forgiven you your

earlier errors and any later ones," and he replied, "Should I then not be a grateful slave."[43]

One of the right-acting first generations said, "When Allah said ﷻ:

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُودَ شُكْرًا

'Work, family of Dāwūd, in thankfulness!'[44] then every hour of the night and the day one of them was praying."[45]

This, along with the fact that some of the actions which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned are obligatory, either on each individual such as walking to the prayer according to the view of those who regard it as an obligation to perform the *ṣalāh* with other people in the mosques, or on the entire community such that if some people do it the others are free of the obligation, for example, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, helping the feeble, and exercising justice between people either in judgement [as does the qadi] or in putting things right. It has been narrated in a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best *ṣadaqah* is putting things right between [people]."[46]

Of these types of *ṣadaqah* that the Prophet ﷺ indicated, there are some whose benefit goes beyond the person's own self-interest such as putting things right, helping a man on to his riding beast by helping him up onto it or lifting his belongings up to him, and good words. Also comprised within it is the greeting of peace, responding to the one who sneezes by making a prayer for him, removing something bothersome from the path, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, burying phlegm and mucus found in the mosque, helping some weak and helpless person in need, helping deaf people to understand what is said, and acting as eyes for the person whose sight is deficient, and guiding the blind and others on the path. In some versions of the hadith of Abū Dharr there is, "Your explaining things on behalf of the incoherent person is a *ṣadaqah*," meaning someone who is not able to speak, either because of a defect in his tongue, or because of some incorrectness in their language,[47] and so one makes clear on their behalf that which they need to have explained.

Another type is that whose benefit is restricted to the person himself, such as glorification, *takbīr*, praise, saying *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah,

walking to the prayer, and two *rakʿahs* at the time of the forenoon, these last two stand in for all of that [the necessary acts of *ṣadaqah*] because in the prayer one uses all the limbs in obedience and worship so that it suffices as thankfulness for His blessings such as the safety and soundness of these limbs and members. Most of the remainder of these aforementioned qualities see the employment of one or some of the limbs and members of the body in particular, and so the *ṣadaqah* done by means of them is only complete if it is done to the number of the bones of the body, which are three hundred and sixty bones as is mentioned in the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah .

There is in the *Musnad* from Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet asked, "Do you know what is the most bounteous and best *ṣadaqah*?" They said, "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said, "The gift (*manīḥah*) that you grant your brother of some dirhams, or the back of a riding animal or the milk of a ewe or the milk of a cow."[48] What is meant by the gift of the dirhams is their being lent to him, the gift of the back of the animal means to lend it to him to ride, the gift of the milk of the ewe or cow means to give him the cow or the ewe so that he can drink its milk

and then return it to the owner. When this word *manīḥah* is used without any qualification it only refers to this [lending].

Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated a hadith of al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever grants the loan of a milking ewe or cow, or of silver, or guides someone on a narrow side-street, then it will be for him like freeing a slave."[49] At-Tirmidhī said, "The meaning of his saying, 'Whoever grants the use of silver,' only means the loan of dirhams. His saying, 'guides someone on a narrow side-street,' only means guidance on the path, which is directing someone on the way.

Al-Bukhārī narrated a hadith of Ḥassān ibn ʿAṭiyyah that Abū Kabshah asSalūlī said, "I heard ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr saying, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "There are forty practices the highest of which is granting the loan of a she-goat for milking, such that whatever active person does any one of these practices hoping for its reward and affirming what is promised with respect to it, Allah will make him enter the Garden because of it."'"[50] Ḥassān said, "So we counted everything other than granting the loan of a she-goat for milking, including returning the greeting of peace,

responding to the person who sneezes by saying a prayer for him, removing something bothersome or harmful from the road, etc., and we were unable to reach even fifteen practices."

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The due of camels is to gather them at the water, to lend them out for drawing water from the well, to lend the stallions out as studs, to lend them out for milking, and to carry people on them in the way of Allah."[51]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every right action is a *ṣadaqah*, and it is a good action that you should meet your brother with a smiling face, and to pour from your well-bucket into his container."[52] Al-Ḥākim and others narrated it with an additional piece which is that, "Whatever a man spends on himself and on his family is recorded for him as a *ṣadaqah*, and that with which he guards his honour is recorded for him as a *ṣadaqah*. Every expenditure which the *mu'min* spends, then Allah guarantees to replace it except for expenditure on acts of disobedience and on construction."[53]

There is in the *Musnad* that Abū Jurā al-Hujaymī said, "I asked the Prophet ﷺ about right action and he

said, ‘Do not look down on any right action, even that you should give someone a free gift of a rope, even if you should give someone a sandal thong, even if you should pour water from your own well-bucket into the container of someone who seeks something to drink, even if you put something off the path which might harm people, even if you meet your brother with a smiling face, even if you meet your brother and greet him, and even if you behave in a friendly and sociable manner with people who are lonely in the land.’”[54]

Other types of *ṣadaqah* are: withholding harm arising from one’s own hands and tongue from people, as is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Dharr, “I asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what are the best actions?’ He replied, ‘*Īmān* in Allah and *jihād* in the way of Allah.’ I asked, ‘And if I do not do so?’ He answered, ‘Help someone who is making something or make something for a clumsy unhandy person.’ I asked, ‘What do you think if I am too weak for some deeds?’ He replied, ‘Withhold your mischief from people, because it is *ṣadaqah*.’”[55]

There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān that Abū Dharr said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, show me an action which if the slave does it he will enter the Garden.’ He

replied, ‘That he has *īmān* in Allah.’ I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, there is action with *īmān*?’ He replied, ‘Let him give a little of that with which Allah provides him.’ I asked, ‘What if he is absolutely bereft, without anything?’ He answered, ‘Let him say what is right with his tongue.’ I asked, ‘What if he is incapable and his tongue will not express what he means?’ He replied, ‘Then let him help someone who has been overcome.’ I asked, ‘What if he is weak and powerless?’ He replied, ‘Then let him make something for a clumsy unhandy person.’ I said, ‘If he [himself] is clumsy unhandy?’ Then he turned to me and said, ‘You don’t want to leave your friend anything good? Then let him protect people from his own mischief.’ I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, all of this is little and easy.’ He said, ‘By the One in Whose hand is my self! any slave who does any one of these practices seeking by it that which is with Allah except I will take him by his hand on the Day of Rising until he enters the Garden.’”[56]

A stipulation in this hadith is that all of these actions must have a pure intention as in the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr in which there is mention of the forty practices. This is as in His saying ﷻ:

لاَّ خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلاَحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاء مَرْضَاتِ اللّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْراً عَظِيماً

"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward."[57] It has been narrated from al-Ḥasan and Ibn Sīrīn that doing acts of kindness is rewarded even if there is no intention in doing them. Al-Ḥasan was asked whether a man whom another asks for some necessity but he hates him and yet gives it to him out of shame will have a reward and he said, "That is one of the types of kindness, and there is a reward for acts of kindness." Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh narrated it.

Ibn Sīrīn was asked whether a man following the corpse to the burial, but not doing it anticipating a reward from Allah for it but out of shame before the family of the deceased would have a reward for it, and he said, "One reward. No rather, he has two rewards: one reward for his prayer over his brother and another reward for joining his ties of relationship with the living." Abū Nuʿaym narrated it in al-Ḥilyah.[58]

Among the types of *ṣadaqah* there is discharging the rights due to a Muslim from a Muslim, some of which are mentioned in preceding hadith. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are five duties which a Muslim has towards another Muslim: returning his greeting, visiting the sick, following the body to the burial, accepting the invitation, and responding to the one who sneezes by saying a prayer for him.” In the version of Muslim there is, “The Muslim has six rights upon the Muslim.” Someone asked, “What are they, Messenger of Allah?” He replied, “When you meet him, greet him; when he invites you, answer him; when he asks you for sincere good advice, then advise him; when he sneezes and praises Allah then say a prayer for him; when he is ill, visit him; and when he dies, follow him.”[59]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that al-Barā’ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told us to do seven things: to visit the sick, follow the corpse to the burial, to respond to the one who sneezes by saying a prayer for him, to fulfil oaths, to help the wronged person, respond to one who invites, and to spread greetings of peace.” In the version that Muslim narrated there is,

“To direct and guide the one who is lost and astray” instead of fulfilling oaths.[60]

One of the types of *ṣadaqah* is walking in order to fulfil the obligatory rights due to other human beings. Ibn ʿAbbās said, “Whoever walks for his brother’s due in order to discharge it, then in every step he has a *ṣadaqah*.”[61]

Another example is to allow some time to the [debtor] who is in difficulty. There is a *marfūʿ* hadith in the *Musnad* and *Sunan Ibn Mājah* from Buraydah, “Whoever allows a [debtor] who is in difficulty some time, then he has a *ṣadaqah* for every day before the debt is due. Then when the debt falls due and he allows him some extra time after that, then he has for every day the like of it in *ṣadaqah*.”[62]

Another example is treating domestic animals well, as the Prophet ﷺ said when he was asked about giving them water to drink, “For every [creature possessing a] moist liver there is a reward,”[63] and he told that a prostitute had given a dog that was panting from thirst a drink and He forgave her.[64]

As for the *ṣadaqah* whose benefit is confined to the person who does it, then that is like the various types of *dhikr* such as glorification, takbīr, praise, *lā ilāha*

illa'llāh – There is no god but Allah, seeking forgiveness, sending blessings on the Prophet ﷺ and similarly recitation of Qur'ān and walking to mosques, sitting in them waiting for the prayer or listening to *dhikr*.

Another example is showing some humility in one's choice of dress, walking, conduct, employing oneself in working for a living, earning a *ḥalāl* income and endeavouring to do that.

Also other examples of it are taking oneself to account for what actions one has already done, remorse and turning in *tawbah* from one's previous wrong actions, and grief because of having done them, regarding the self (*nafs*) as despicable, and reproaching and blaming it, hating it for the sake of Allah ﷻ weeping from fear of Allah, exalted is He, reflecting on the hidden kingdom (malakūt) of the heavens and the earth and on the affairs of the next life such as the promise [of the Garden to the *mu'minūn*] and the threat [of the Fire to *kāfirūn* and the hypocrites], etc., of those things which increase *īmān* in the heart and from which many of the actions of the heart originate, such as fear, love, hope, reliance [on Allah], etc. It has been said that this reflection is

better than optional extra physical actions. That has been narrated of more than one of the Followers, of whom are Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab, al-Ḥasan, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. There is also in the words of Imam Aḥmad that which would show it. Kaʿb said, “That I should weep from fear of Allah is more beloved to me than that I should give *ṣadaqah* with my own weight in gold.”[65]

1 Al-Bazzār (928)

2 Muslim (1007)

3 *Ḍuḥā*: the forenoon, from after sunrise until before the midday prayer. Trans.

4 Abū Dāwūd (5242), Aḥmad (5:354)

5 Al-Bukhārī (1445), Muslim (1008)

6 Ibn Ḥibbān (299)

7 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (639)

8 Sūrat al-Infiṭār: 6-8

9 Sūrat al-Mulk: 23

10 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 78

11 Sūrat al-Balad: 8-9

12 Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (100)

13 Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (102)

14 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:22)

15 Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (182)

16 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:210) as a saying of Abu'd-Dardā'

17 Al-Bukhārī (6412)

18 Sūrat at-Takāthur: 8

19 At-Tirmidhī (3358), Ibn Ḥibbān (7364)

20 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (30:284)

21 Sūrat at-Takāthur: 8

22 Sūrat al-Isrā': 36

23 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (1604)

24 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (24)

25 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (148)

26 Al-Kharā'iṭī in *Faḍīlat ash-shukr* (57)

27 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 34

28 Abū Dāwūd (5073), an-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (7)

29 Al-Ḥākim (1:514)

30 Al-Kharā'iṭī in *Faḍīlat ash-shukr* (39)

31 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (12)

32 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (6:56)

33 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (6:56)

34 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (7)

35 Ibn Mājah (3805)

36 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (111)

37 Sūrat an-Naml: 15

38 Ibn Abī Ḥātim mentioned this in his *tafsīr* as mentioned in the *tafsīr* of Ibn Kathīr (3:370)

39 Sūrah Hūd: 8

40 Abū Dāwūd (1286)

41 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (129)

42 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (188)

43 Narrated by al-Mughīrah ibn Shuʿbah in al-Bukhārī (1130), Muslim (2819) and others.

44 Sūrah Saba': 13

45 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Kitāb ash-shukr* (74)

46 Al-Bazzār (2059)

47 Particularly in the case of someone who is among people whose language he does not speak well. Ed.

48 Aḥmad (1:463) and also al-Bazzār (947)

49 Aḥmad (4:285), at-Tirmidhī (1957)

50 Al-Bukhārī (2488)

51 Muslim (988)

52 Aḥmad (3:344)

53 Al-Ḥākim (2:50)

54 Aḥmad (5:63)

55 Al-Bukhārī (2382), Muslim (84)

56 Ibn Ḥibbān (373)

57 Sūrat an-Nisā': 114

58 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:264)

59 Al-Bukhārī (1183), Muslim (2162)

60 Al-Bukhārī (1182), Muslim (2066)

61 As-Suyūṭī narrated it in *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr* (2:838)

62 Aḥmad (5:351), Ibn Mājah (2418)

63 Al-Bukhārī (2363), Muslim (2244) and others

64 Narrated in a hadith of al-Bukhārī (3467), Muslim (2245) and others

65 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (5:366)

الحديث السابع والعشرون

عَنِ النَّوَّاسِ بْنِ سِمْعَانَ ﷺ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿الْبِرُّ حُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ، وَالإِثْمُ مَا حَاكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، وَكَرِهْتَ أَنْ يَطَّلِعَ عَلَيْهِ النَّاسُ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

وَعَنْ وَابِصَةَ بْنِ مَعْبَدٍ ﷺ قَالَ: أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ، فَقَالَ: ﴿جِئْتَ تَسْأَلُ عَنِ الْبِرِّ وَالإِثْمِ؟﴾، قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ، قَالَ: ﴿اسْتَفْتِ قَلْبَكَ، الْبِرُّ مَا اطْمَأَنَّتْ إِلَيْهِ النَّفْسُ، وَاطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْهِ الْقَلْبُ، وَالإِثْمُ مَا حَاكَ فِي النَّفْسِ، وَتَرَدَّدَ فِي الصَّدْرِ؛ وَإِنْ أَفْتَاكَ النَّاسُ، وَأَفْتَوْكَ﴾. قَالَ الشَّيخ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ: حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ، رَوَيْنَاهُ فِي مُسْنَدَيِ الإِمَامَيْنِ أَحمَدَ، والدَّارِمِيِّ بِإِسْنَادٍ حَسَنٍ.

Birr and *Ithm*

An-Nawwās ibn Samʿān ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “*Birr*[1] is good character,[2] and *ithm*[3] is that which becomes agitated in your self and which you would hate for people to discover.” Muslim narrated it (2553).

Wābiṣah ibn Maʿbad ﷺ said, “I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said, ‘You have come to ask about *birr*?’ I said, ‘Yes!’ He said, ‘Ask your heart

for a judgement.[4] *Birr* is that with which the self is at rest and with which the heart is at ease. *Ithm* is that which becomes agitated in the self and it goes to and fro[5] in the breast[6] even though people repeatedly give you a judgement [as to a matter's permissibility]'." The Shaykh said ﷺ, "A good hadith which we have narrated in the two *Musnads* of the Imams Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (228/4) and ad-Dārimī (245-246/2) with a good chain of transmission."

As for the hadith of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān, Muslim narrated it in the version of Muʿāwiyah ibn Ṣāliḥ from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Jubayr ibn Nufayr from his father from an-Nawwās. Muslim narrated the hadith of Muʿāwiyah, ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān and his father, whereas al-Bukhārī didn't.

As for Wābiṣah's hadith, Imam Aḥmad narrated it by way of Ḥammād ibn Salamah from az-Zubayr ibn ʿAbd as-Salām from Ayyūb ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Mikraz that Wābiṣah ibn Maʿbad said, "I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanting not to leave anything of *birr* and *ithm* without asking about them, and so he said to me, 'Come closer, Wābiṣah.' I came closer to him until my knees touched his and he asked, 'Wābiṣah, shall I tell you what you came to ask about

or do you want to ask me?' I answered, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me.' He said, 'You came to ask me about *birr* and *ithm*.' I said, 'Yes.' He brought his three fingers together and began to strike with them on my chest saying, 'Wābiṣah, ask your self for a judgement. *Birr* is that with which the self is at rest and with which the heart is at ease. *Ithm* is that which becomes agitated in the heart and it goes agitatedly to and fro in the breast even though people repeatedly give you a judgement [as to a matter's permissibility].'" In another version of Imam Aḥmad's which az-Zubayr did not hear from Ayyūb there is that he said, "Those who used to sit with him told me, and I had seen him..." In the chain of transmission of this hadith there are two matters each of which make it necessary to regard it as weak:

First, the fact that there is a break in the chain of transmission between az-Zubayr and Ayyūb, because he narrated it from people from whom he had not heard it.

Second, the weakness of this az-Zubayr. Ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "He narrated hadith which are rejected." Ibn Ḥibbān also regarded him as weak, but he called him Ayyūb ibn ʿAbd as-Salām, and made a mistake regarding his name. He has other routes of

transmission from Wābiṣah which Imam Aḥmad also narrated in the version of Muʿāwiyah ibn Ṣāliḥ that Abū ʿAbdullāh as-Sulamī said, “I heard Wābiṣah ...” and he mentioned a summary of the hadith. His wording is, “*Birr* is that for which your breast expands, and *ithm* is that which goes to and fro in your breast even if people give a judgement in favour of it.”[7]

ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī said about this as-Sulamī, “He is unknown.”

Al-Bazzār and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it and they have Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Asadī. Al-Bazzār said, “We don’t know anyone who named him.” That was how he said it. He is named in some narrations as Muḥammad. ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Saʿīd the Ḥāfiẓ said, “Even if someone were to say that he is Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd who was crucified, I would not contend with that.” This one was crucified by al-Manṣūr as a *zindīq* (heretic), and he is very well known for lying and fabrication, but however he never met Wābiṣah, and Allah knows best.

This hadith is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways some of whose paths of transmission are fine. Imam Aḥmad, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated it by way of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr

from Zayd ibn Salām from his grandfather Mamtur that Abū Umāmah said, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, what is *ithm*?' He said, 'When something goes to and fro in your breast then give it up.'"[8] This chain of transmission is fine according to the conditions of Muslim, because [Muslim] narrated the hadith of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr from Zayd ibn Salām, and Aḥmad regarded his having heard from him as soundly established even though Ibn Maʿīn denied it.

Imam Aḥmad narrated in the version of ʿAbdullāh ibn al-ʿAlā' ibn Zabr, "I heard Muslim ibn Mishkam say, 'I heard Abū Thaʿlabah al-Khushani say, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, tell me what is permitted to me and what is forbidden for me.' He said, '*Birr* is that towards which the self is at rest and with which the heart is tranquil. *Ithm* is that towards which the self is not at rest and with which the heart is not tranquil even if those who give judgement [that it is permissible] do so.'"'"[9] This also is a fine chain of transmission. ʿAbdullāh ibn al-ʿAlā' ibn Zabr is well known to be dependable and trustworthy, and al-Bukhārī narrated from him, and Muslim ibn Mishkam is also well known to be dependable and trustworthy.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated with a weak chain of transmission the hadith that Wāthilah ibn al-Asqaʿ said, “I said to the Prophet ﷺ ‘Give me a judgement on a matter about which I will not ask anyone after you.’ He said, ‘Seek a judgement from yourself.’ I asked, ‘How can I do that?’ He answered, ‘If you give up that which causes you doubt in favour of that which does not cause you doubt, even if those who give judgement do so.’ I asked, ‘How can I do that?’ He answered, ‘Place your hand on your heart, because the heart is tranquil with respect to that which is permissible, but it is not tranquil with respect to that which is forbidden.’”[10] The like of it is also narrated in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah with a weak chain of transmission.

Ibn Lahīʿah narrated from Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb that Suwayd ibn Qays told him from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiyah that a man asked the Prophet ﷺ saying, “Messenger of Allah, what is permitted to me as opposed to that which is forbidden me?” He repeated it to him three times, each time the Prophet ﷺ remaining silent. Later he asked, “Where is the questioner?” and so he said, “It is me, Messenger of Allah.” So he said [indicating] with his fingers, “That

which your heart rejects, then give it up." Abū'l-Qāsim al-Baghawī narrated it in his *Muʿjam* and he said, "I do not know whether ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiyah listened to the Prophet ﷺ directly or not. And this is the only hadith of his which I know." I say that he is ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiyah ibn Ḥudayj whose lineage is given in *Kitāb az-zuhd* of Ibn al-Mubārak. This ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān is a well known Follower and thus his hadith is a *mursal* hadith.

There is an authentic report that Ibn Masʿūd said, "*Ithm* is that which makes an [uneasy] impression on the heart," and Imam Aḥmad regarded it as a sound argument. He narrated from Jarīr from Manṣūr from Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān that his father said, "'Abdullāh said, 'Beware of that which makes an uneasy impression on the heart, and whatever makes such an impression on your heart, then give it up." Abū'd-Dardā' said, "Good is in tranquility and evil is in doubt."

It is narrated in an interrupted fashion from Ibn Masʿūd that someone asked him, "What do you think about something which goes to and fro in our breasts and we do not know whether it is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*?" He answered, "Beware of those things which make

unsettling impressions [on the heart] because they are *ithm*."[11] [There are two words used by Ibn Masʿūd ﷺ in these traditions deriving from the roots *ḥazza* and *ḥakka*] and *ḥazza* and *ḥakka* are synonyms, meaning, "that which causes the effects of constriction and difficulty, aversion and dislike."

These hadith comprise explanations of *birr* and *ithm*, and some explain the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām*. In the hadith of an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān, the Prophet ﷺ explained *birr* as good character, and in the hadith of Wābiṣah and others, he explained it as that towards which the heart and the self are at rest, just as he explained the *ḥalāl* as being that in the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah. There is only some differences in the explanation of *birr* because when *birr* is used unqualifiedly it is used in two distinct senses:

First, in the sense of treating people with good and kind behaviour, and in particularly singling out good treatment of parents, so that one often mentions good treatment (*birr*) of parents, but it is often used unqualifiedly for good treatment of people in general. Ibn al-Mubārak compiled a book which he called, *Kitāb al-birr wa'ṣ-ṣilah* – The Book of Good Treatment and Joining Ties of Kinship, – and similarly there are

in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and *Jāmiʿ at-Tirmidhī* similar books[12] also called *Kitāb al-birr wa'ṣ-ṣilah* and this book comprises good treatment of people in general, but gives precedence to good treatment of parents over good treatment to others. There is in the hadith of Bahz ibn Ḥakīm from his father that his grandfather asked, "Messenger of Allah, whom should I treat well?" He replied, "Your mother." He asked, "Then whom?" He answered, "Your father." He asked, "Then whom?" He answered, "The closest kin and then the next closest kin."[13]

In this same sense is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "The Ḥajj which is performed with good treatment (*mabrūr*[14]) has no reward other than the Garden."[15] There is in the *Musnad* that he ﷺ was asked about good treatment and behaviour (*birr*) on the Ḥajj and he said, "Feeding food and spreading [the greeting of] peace," and in another version, "And wholesome good (*ṭīb*[16]) words."[17]

Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ used to say, "*Birr* is a simple thing: a smiling face and soft speech."

When *birr* is coupled with *taqwā* as in His saying ﷻ:

وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

"Help each other to goodness (*birr*) and *taqwā*,"[18] then the meaning of *birr* may be treating people well and the meaning of *taqwā* good behaviour towards the Real (al-Ḥaqq)[19] by acting in obedience to Him and avoiding that which He forbids. It may be that what is meant by *birr* is performance of the obligations, and by *taqwā* avoiding those things which are forbidden. In His saying, exalted is He:

وَلاَ تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى الإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

"Do not help each other to wrongdoing (*ithm*) and enmity (ʿudwān),"[20] actsof disobedience may be meant by *ithm*, and by ʿudwān is meant wronging people. It may be meant by *ithm* that which is forbidden in itself such as adultery, theft, and drinking alcohol, and by ʿudwān going over the limits in an act which is of its own nature permissible by going to such lengths as are forbidden, such as in killing someone whom it is permitted to kill in retaliation and someone whom it is not permitted to kill, taking more than what is obligatory from people in *zakāh* and the like, going

beyond the limit in lashing someone who is commanded to be lashed for a *ḥadd* punishment and the like.

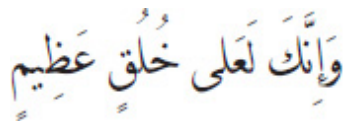
The second meaning of *birr* is the performance of all the outward and inward acts of obedience, as in His saying, exalted is He:

وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَالْمَلآئِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُواْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاء والضَّرَّاء وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

"Rather, those with true devoutness (*birr*) are those who have *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who have *taqwā*."[21] It is narrated that someone asked the Prophet ﷺ about *īmān* and he recited this *āyah*.

Birr, in this sense, comprises all inward acts of obedience such as *īmān* in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and outward acts of obedience such as spending property for the sake of that which Allah loves, establishing the *ṣalāh*, paying the *zakāh*, fulfilling contracts, being patient with decrees of destiny such as sickness and poverty, and being patiently steadfast in acts of obedience such as being steadfast at the time of meeting the enemy in battle.

The reply of the Prophet ﷺ in the hadith of an-Nawwās may comprise all of these aspects, since good character may mean taking on the qualities of character of the *Sharīʿah*, and taking on the courtesy which Allah teaches His slaves in His Book, as He says, exalted is He, to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:



"Indeed you are truly vast in character."[22] ʿĀ'ishah said, "His character was the Qur'ān,"[23] meaning that he had taken on its courtesies, and so he carried out its commands and avoided its prohibitions, and so acting in accordance with the Qur'ān became an inseparable part of his character, natural disposition and

constitution, and this is the best character, the most noble and most beautiful.

Someone has said that all of the *dīn* is good character. As for in the hadith of Wābiṣah, he said, "that with which the self is at rest and with which the heart is at ease," and in another version, "towards which the breast expands." He explained that which is *ḥalāl* similarly in the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah and others. This shows that Allah created His slaves with the disposition to recognise the truth, to be at ease with it and to accept it, and He fixed the love of that and aversion for its opposite in our constitutions.

This is all comprised in His words in the hadith [*qudsī*] of ʿIyāḍ ibn Ḥimār, "I created My slaves as those naturally inclined to the truth and as Muslims, and then the *shayṭāns* came to them and made them deviate from their *dīn*, and they forbade them what I had permitted them and ordered them to associate as partners with Me that for which I revealed no authority."[24]

His saying, "Every one born is born in the natural condition, and then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian, just as an animal delivers a

perfect baby animal. Do you perceive any mutilation in it?" Abū Hurayrah said, "Recite, if you wish:

فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ

'Allah's natural pattern on which He made mankind. There is no changing Allah's creation.'[25]"[26]

For this reason, Allah names that which He commands *maʿrūf*[27] (what is right) and that which He forbids *munkar*[28] (what is wrong). He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

"Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny,"[29] and He says in description of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ

"...making good things *ḥalāl* for them and bad things *ḥarām* for them."[30] He told us that the hearts of the *mu'minūn* are tranquil and at rest with His *dhikr*, so

that the heart which the light of *īmān* has entered and which has expanded and dilated because of it, becomes at ease with the truth, and tranquil because of it, and it accepts it, and it flees in aversion from falsehood, detests it and does not accept it.

Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, “I warn you to beware of the deviation of the wise person, because *shayṭān* may utter the phrase which leads to error on the tongue of the wise person, and the hypocrite may say the true word.” Someone asked Muʿādh, “What will let me know that the wise person is saying something in error, and that the hypocrite is saying the true word?” He said, “Of the talk of the wise man, avoid those things which become notorious about which people say, ‘What is this?’ Don’t let that turn you away from him, because it is hoped that he might retract, and accept the truth whenever you hear it, because there is light over the truth.” Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[31] In another narration of his there is that he said, “Rather, that of the wise person’s words which are ambiguous to you so much so that you say, ‘What did he mean by these words?’”

This shows that the affair of truth and falsehood is never confused to the *mu’min* withinsight, rather he

knows the truth by the lightwhich is overit andso his heart accepts it, and he flees in aversion from falsehood, rejects it and does not recognise it [as true]. In this same sense is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "There will be people at the end of time who narrate to you that which neither you nor your parents ever heard, so beware of them!"[32] meaning that they will produce that which the hearts of the *mu'minūn* will reject and refuse to recognise [as true]. In his saying, "neither you nor your parents," there is an indication that that of which the knowledge is firmly established with the *mu'minūn* over many ages and epochs is the truth, but that whatever is innovated after that of those things which they reject, then there is no good in it.

The hadith of Wābiṣah, and those in the same sense, show that one must refer to the heart when there is some ambiguity, and that then whatever the heart is at rest with and with which the breast is expansive is *birr* and *ḥalāl*. Whatever is not like that is *ithm* and *ḥarām*.

His saying in the hadith of an-Nawwās, "*Ithm* is that which becomes agitated in your self and which you would hate for people to discover," indicates that

ithm is that which has the effect of creating difficulty, constriction, unease and disturbance in the breast so that the breast does not become dilated and expanded for it, and along with that people regard it as wrong since they reject it whenever they discover it. This is the highest degree of knowledge of what *ithm* is in cases which are ambiguous, i.e. that it is that which people reject in the person of the one who does it or in anybody else.

In this same sense is the saying of Ibn Masʿūd, "That which the *mu'minūn* regard as good is good with Allah. That which the *mu'minūn* regard as ugly is ugly to Allah."[33]

His saying in the hadith of Wābiṣah and Abū Thaʿlabah, "Even if those who give judgement (*fatwā*) do so," means that whatever goes to and fro in a person's breast is *ithm* even if others give one the judgement that it is not *ithm*. This is a second degree, which is that something is reprehensible to the person himself even though it is not so to others, then he made that *ithm*. This is only in the case where the person is someone whose breast has expanded with *īmān*, and the one who gives the judgement does so purely from his own opinion or his inclining towards

his desire without any *Sharīʿah* proof. As for in the case where the one who gives the judgement does so with a *Sharīʿah* proof, then it is obligatory for the person who sought the judgement to follow it even if his breast is not expanded to that. This is just the same as the licence which the *Sharīʿah* grants in certain cases, such as breaking the fast on a journey and in sickness, shortening the prayer on a journey, etc., of those things with which many ignorant people are not at ease, in which case no regard is due to it [the opinion of such people].

Sometimes the Prophet ﷺ used to tell his Companions to do things with which some of their hearts were not at ease and which they would feel like refusing to do and he would become angry at, such as when he told them to cancel their Ḥajj and transform it into an *ʿUmrah* and those of them who did, disliked to do it. Similarly, he told them to slaughter their sacrificial animals and to undo the *ʿUmrah* of Hudaybiyyah and they disliked it. They disliked his agreeing to the stipulation of Quraysh that he should return that year [from attempting the *ʿUmrah* and without completing it], and that he must return to

them whoever of them [Quraysh] came to him [as Muslims].

In summary, on whatever there is narrated a definitive text then the *mu'min* must only obey Allah and His Messenger with respect to it, as He says, exalted is He:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْراً أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ

"When Allah and His Messenger have decided something it is not for any *mu'min* man or woman to have a choice about it."[34]

One must accept that with delight and contentment since it is obligatory to have *īmān* in whatever Allah and His Messenger legislate and to be contented with it, and submit to it, as He says, exalted is He:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىَ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُواْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجاً مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُواْ تَسْلِيماً

"No, by your Lord, they are not *mu'minūn* until they make you their judge in the disputes that break out between them, and then find no resistance within themselves to what you decide and submit themselves completely."[35]

As for that of which there is no definitive text from Allah or His Messenger, nor from anyone of the Companions and the right-acting first generations of the ummah upon whose word we are required to model ourselves: Whenever something occurs in the being of the *mu'min* whose heart is at rest in *īmān* and whose breast is expanded with the light of gnosis and certainty, and it makes some impression within his breast because of an existing ambiguity, and he can only find someone to issue him a *fatwā* licensing it from their own opinion, someone whose knowledge and *dīn* are not dependable, and indeed he is someone who is well known to follow his own whims, then the *mu'min* must return from that which causes disquiet in his breast even if those who give him judgements in the matter's favour do so.

Imam Aḥmad stipulated as much. Al-Marwazī said in *Kitāb al-waraʿ* – the Book of Scrupulousness, "I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh, 'Al-Qaṭīʿah is more congenial to me than all other markets, and something has occurred to my heart about its affair.' He said, 'Its affair is filthy and tarnished.' I asked, 'So you dislike working there?' He answered, 'Put that away from you if nothing occurs to your heart.' I replied, 'Something of it has

occurred to my heart.' He said, 'Ibn Masʿūd said, "*Ithm* is that which makes an [uneasy] impression on the heart."' I said, 'This was only in the sense of mutual counselling.' He asked, 'What happens in your heart?' I replied, 'My heart is troubled.' He said, '*Ithm* is that which makes an [uneasy] impression on the heart.'"

We have seen previously in the commentary on the hadith of an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr that, "The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear," in the commentary on the hadith of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī, "Leave that which causes you doubt for that which does not cause you doubt," and the commentary on the hadith, "If you have no shame, then do what you will," there are some things which are connected to the commentaries of the hadith mentioned here.

Some groups of the Shafi' and Ḥanafī *fuqahā*' who discourse on *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of *fiqh*) mention the matter of whether inspiration[36] is a proof or not, and they mention that there is a disagreement among them. A party of our [Ḥanbalī] people mention that *kashf*[37] (unveiling) is not the way to derive judgements. Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā took his stand on the words of Aḥmad in criticism of those people who spoke about whisperings and thoughts which occur to

the mind, but another party of our colleagues disagreed with them about that. We have already mentioned here the position of Aḥmad that one has to return to [whether or not something creates] impressions on the heart. Aḥmad and others only criticised those of the Sufis who discoursed about whisperings and thoughts which occur to the mind in that they talk about that without ascribing it to any *Sharīʿah* proof, but rather to pure opinion and as a matter of tasting, just as he used to reject talking about issues of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* from the perspective of pure opinion without any *Sharīʿah* proof.

As for referring ambiguous matters back to [see whether they cause] impressions on the heart, prophetic texts and *fatwās* of the Companions show that, so how would Imam Aḥmad reject it after that? Rather, in particular he took the position that one has to refer back to that in agreement with them. We have previously seen the hadith, "Truthfulness is tranquillity and lying is doubt." Truthfulness is distinguished from lying by the heart's being at peace with it, by its recognition of it, and by its aversion to lying and rejection of it, as ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym said, "[True] hadith have light like the light of the day

so that you recognise them, and [the false have] darkness like the dark of night so that you reject them."

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of Rabīʿah from ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Saʿīd ibn Suwayd from Abū Ḥumayd and Abū Usayd that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "When you hear a hadith from me which your hearts recognise and towards which your hair and skin soften and you think that it is close to you, then I am the closest of you to it. When you hear a hadith from me which your hearts reject and to which your hair and skin are averse, and you think that it is far from you, then I am the furthest of you from it."[38] Some have said about his chain of transmission that it is according to the criteria of Muslim because he narrated a hadith with this specific chain of transmission, but this hadith is unsound, because Bukayr ibn al-Ashajj narrated it from ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Saʿīd from ʿAbbās ibn Sahl from ʿUbayy ibn Kaʿb as his own saying, and al-Bukhārī said that was the more sound narration.

Yaḥyā ibn Ādam narrated from Ibn Abī Dhi'b from Saʿīd al-Maqbūrī from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whenever you are narrated a hadith from me

which you recognise and do not reject as unknown then affirm it, because I say what is recognised and not rejected. When you are narrated a hadith from me which you reckon to be bad and which you do not recognise then do not affirm it, because I do not say things which are reckoned to be bad and which are not recognised." This hadith is unsound also. There is disagreement in his chain of transmission through Ibn Abī Dhi'b. The hadith masters narrated it from him from Saʿīd as a *mursal* hadith, and the *mursal* version is the most sound according to the imams of hadith such as Ibn Maʿīn, al-Bukhārī, Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, and Ibn Khuzaymah, who said, "I have not seen any of the imams of hadith who established it firmly as being connected [directly back to the Prophet ﷺ without any gaps in the chain of transmission]."

These hadith are only interpreted – assuming they are sound – as referring to the recognition of the giftedly intelligent and critical imams of hadith who have had a great deal of experience with the words of the Prophet ﷺ and of others, and their recognition of the states of the narrators of hadith and those who transmit traditions and their recognition of their truthfulness or their dishonesty, their capabilities in terms of memorisation and their exactness in that. These have a particular critical faculty with respect to hadith the knowledge of which is uniquely theirs, just as the skilful money changer has a unique talent for recognising coins, the good quality and the poor quality, those which are pure and those which are alloyed, and just as the skilful jeweller has a unique knowledge of precious stones because of his critical examination of them. None of these could find ways of expressing the causes for his recognition, and would be unable to establish a proof of it to others. The sign of that is that a single hadith can be exhibited to a group of those who know this science and they will agree on the right response to it without collusion.

This was put to the test among them more than one time at the time of Abū Zurʿah and Abū Ḥātim and

that was found to be the case. The questioner said, “I witness that this knowledge is inspiration.” Al-Aʿmash said, “Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī was very critically gifted in sorting hadith. I used to listen to the men [of this science], and then I would repeat to him what I had heard.” ʿAmr ibn Qays said, “The person of hadith has to be like the money changer who tests the dirhams [to see which are pure silver, poorer qualities, or alloys], because some dirhams are counterfeit and false, and the hadith are just like that.”

Al-Awzāʿī said, “We used to hear hadith and then repeat them to our companions just as we would show counterfeit dirhams to the money changers. What they recognised we would accept, but what they rejected we would abandon.”

Someone said to ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, “You say about something, ‘This is sound, but this is not reliable.’ On whose authority do you say that?” He answered, “What do you think if you went to someone who had a critical faculty with respect to coins and showed him your dirhams, and he said, ‘This one is good, but this one is counterfeit,’ would you ask him about that? Or would you submit the matter to him?” The man replied, “No, rather I would submit the

matter to him." He said, "This is like that because of the long time spent in sitting with [people of knowledge], discussion and experience of it."

Something very similar is also narrated of Imam Aḥmad, that someone asked him, "Abū ʿAbdullāh, you say, 'This hadith is unknown and rejected,' but how can you know that when you have not written all of the hadith?" He answered, "Our simile is like the person who has developed a critical faculty for distinguishing coins, because not every coin has passed through his hands, but when a dīnār comes into his hands he knows whether it is good or false."

Ibn Mahdī said, "Recognition of the hadith is inspiration." He said, "Our rejection of hadith is regarded by ignorant people as oracular divination."

Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said, "The simile of the faculty of recognition of hadith is that of a precious stone whose value is one hundred dinars [gold coins] and another whose colour is similar but which is only worth ten dirhams [silver coins]." Just as the person with a critical faculty for detecting good and bad coins is not able to tell the reasons for his critical skills, similarly we have been provided a science which we are not able to tell how it is that we know that this

hadith is false, and that this other hadith is unknown, except that it is through what we recognise." He said, "The good quality of the dīnār is recognised by comparison with others, and if it differs from it in redness and yellowness then it is known that it is debased. A type of precious stone is known by comparison with others. Then if it differs in lustre and density then one knows that it is glass. The authenticity of the hadith is known from the just natures of those who transmit them, and that its words are words the like of which are appropriate for the speech of prophethood. Their unsound natures are known from the fact of their being uniquely narrated by those whose integrity would not be accepted in narration [of hadith], and Allah knows best."

In any case, those critical and highly gifted intellects which recognise the defects of hadith are an extremely few individuals from the people of hadith. The first person who became well known for his critical discrimination with respect to hadith was Ibn Sīrīn, who was succeeded by Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī. Shuʿbah learnt that from him, and then Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān and Ibn Mahdī learnt from him, and in turn Aḥmad, ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī and Ibn Maʿīn learnt from

the two of them. Then the likes of al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, Abū Zurʿah and Abū Ḥātim learnt from them.

Abū Zurʿah in his own time used to say, “There are very few who understand this. How re-inforced this would be if I handed it over to one or two! How few you find who do this well!” When Abū Zurʿah died, Abū Ḥātim said, “The one who used to do this well has gone,” meaning Abū Zurʿah, “No one remains in Egypt or Iraq who does this well.” Someone asked him after the death of Abū Zurʿah, “Do you recognise anyone today who knows this?” He answered, “No.”

A group of people came after these, of them an-Nasā’ī, al-ʿUqaylī, Ibn ʿAdī, and ad-Dāraquṭnī. There were very few who came after them who excelled in the knowledge of that, so much so that Abū’l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī said, at the beginning of his book al-Mawḍāʿāt (Fabricated hadith), “There are so few who understand this, indeed there are none,” and Allah knows best.

1 *Birr* and *ithm* are untranslated because almost untranslatable, and also because the point of the chapter is that the Arabic speakers came to ask what they meant. Trans.

"*Birr* is said by some to signify primarily *Ampleness, largeness, or extensiveness*; whence *barr* (land) as opposed to *baḥr* (sea): then, *Benevolent and solicitous regard* or *treatment* or *conduct* [*to parents and others;* i.e. *piety to parents; and, towards God*]: and *goodness*, or *beneficence*: and *kindness*, or *good and affectionate and gentle behaviour, and regard for the circumstances of another." *Lane's Lexicon.*

2 *Khuluq* signifies "the fashion of the inner man." *Lane's Lexicon.* Thus we have translated it as "character". Trans.

3 *Ithm* is a "sin" or a "crime". *Lane's Lexicon.* However, we deplore the use of the word "sin" today, even though it is technically correct, since in Christian usage it denotes a specific "original sin" for which Christianity alone is redemption. Trans.

4 *Istafti* is literally: ask for a *fatwā.* Trans.

5 *ḥāka* is the action of the weaver passing the shuttle to and for in the loom. Trans.

6 Sometimes the word "breast" (*ṣadr*) is used instead of heart indicating the area around the heart and close to it but not the heart itself. Trans.

7 Aḥmad (4:227)

8 Aḥmad (5:252) and Ibn Ḥibbān (176)

9 Aḥmad (4:194)

10 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (22:193)

11 Ibn al-Athīr mentions it in *an-Nihāyah* and Ibn al-Hawzī in *Gharīb al-hadith*

12 The main chapters in the major hadith texts are called *kitāb* meaning book; that is what is meant here. Ed.

13 Abū Dāwūd (5139), at-Tirmidhī (1897), and others such as Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad*

14 The word *mabrūr* is from the same root as *birr*. Ed.

15 Al-Bukhārī (1773), Muslim (1349) and others

16 *Ṭīb* – literally "fragrant". Trans.

17 Aḥmad (3:325)

18 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 2

19 Al-Ḥaqq is one of the beautiful names of Allah meaning the "True" or the "Real". Ed.

20 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 2

21 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 177

22 Sūrat al-Qalam: 4

23 Muslim (746), Abū Dāwūd (1342) and others.

24 Muslim (2865)

25 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 30

26 Al-Bukhārī (1292, 1319), Muslim (2658)

27 *Maʿrūf:* literally "well recognised, well known". Trans.

28 *Munkar:* literally "unknown, rejected and spurned". Trans.

29 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 90

30 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 157

31 Abū Dāwūd (4611)

32 Muslim (6) and others

33 Aḥmad (1:379)

34 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 36

35 Sūrat an-Nisā': 65

36 *Ilhām* is inspiration received by someone who is not a prophet such as a sudden thought or feeling that one gets

unexpectedly which indicates or provides a solution to a problem one is facing. Although the principle of *ilhām* is well established in the Qur'ān, there remains the question of whether it can be considered a *Sharīʿah* proof or not. Ed.

37 *Kashf* (unveiling) is similar to inspiration but is more a vision than a thought and is often experienced by gnostics. Ed.

38 Aḥmad (1:379)

الحديث الثامن والعشرون

عَنِ الْعِرْبَاضِ بْنِ سَارِيَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: وَعَظَنَا رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ مَوْعِظَةً وَجِلَتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوبُ، وَذَرَفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُيُونُ، فَقُلْنَا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! كَأَنَّهَا مَوْعِظَةُ مُوَدِّعٍ، فَأَوْصِنَا، قَالَ: ﴿أُوصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ، وَالسَّمْعِ، وَالطَّاعَةِ، وَإِنْ تَأَمَّرَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَبْدٌ، وَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ بَعْدِي فَسَيَرَى اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا، فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ، عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِذِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحْدَثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ؛ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ. رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ، وَالتِّرمِذِيُّ، وقَالَ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ.

Taqwā of Allah, Hearing and Obedience

Al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ admonished[1] us with an admonition by which the hearts became frightened and the eyes flowed with tears, so we said, ‘Messenger of Allah, it is as if it were a farewell admonition, so advise us.’ He said, ‘I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ and to hear and obey even if a slave is given command over you. Whoever of you lives after me will

see many disagreements, so you must take hold of my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided *khulafā'* who take the right way.[2] Bite on it with the molar teeth. Beware of newly introduced matters, for every newly introduced matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a straying, and every straying is in the Fire." Abū Dāwūd (4607) and *at-Tirmidhī* (2676) narrated it and he [at-Tirmidhī] said, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith."

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, *at-Tirmidhī* and Ibn Mājah narrated this hadith in the version of Thawr ibn Yazīd from Khālid ibn Maʿdān from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAmr as-Sulamī and Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd added Ḥujr ibn Ḥujr al-Kilāʿī, and from both of them[3] from al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah. At-Tirmidhī said that it is a good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith. Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuʿaym said, "It is a good hadith from the *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith of the people of Shām." He said, "Al-Bukhārī and Muslim didn't leave it out because they rejected it." Al-Ḥākim claimed that the reason they left it out was because they believed that it had no narrator from Khālid ibn Maʿdān other than Thawr ibn Yazīd, whereas Buḥayr ibn Saʿīd, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm at-Taymī and others also narrated it from him.

I say that the matter is not as he thinks, and the hadith is not according to their conditions since they did not narrate any hadith from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAmr as-Sulamī nor from Ḥujr al-Kilāʿī who were not well known for knowledge and narration of hadith.

Also, there is a difference of opinion about Khālid bin Maʿdān, because it has been narrated from him as we have seen previously but also it has been narrated from him from Ibn Abī Bilāl from al-ʿIrbāḍ, and Imam Aḥmad also narrated it in this fashion. It has also been narrated from Damrah ibn Ḥabīb from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAmr as-Sulamī from al-ʿIrbāḍ; Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated it from his path and added in his hadith, “I have left you on pure white whose night is like its day; no-one deviates from it after me but one who is to perish,” and he added at the end of the hadith, “the believer is like the camel with a ring in its nose; where he is led he goes submissively.”[4]

A party of those who memorise hadith rejected this extra portion at the end of the hadith and they said, “It is inserted into it and is not originally from it.” Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī and others said that. Al-Ḥākim narrated it and said about his hadith, “Asad ibn

Wadāʿah used to add into this hadith, ‘the believer is like the camel with a ring in its nose; where he is led he goes submissively.’”

Ibn Mājah also narrated it[5] in the narration of ʿAbdullāh ibn al-ʿAlā’ ibn Zabr as, “Yaḥyā ibn Abī’l-Muṭāʿ told me, ‘I heard al-ʿIrbāḍ...’” and so he mentioned the hadith. Apparently this is a fine chain of transmission which is connected at every point, and the narrators are all well-known and trustworthy, and he declared openly that he had heard it directly, and al-Bukhārī mentioned in his *Tārīkh* (History) based on this narration, that Yaḥyā ibn Abī’l-Muṭāʿ had heard directly from al-ʿIrbāḍ. Nevertheless, those who memorise the hadith from the people of Shām rejected that, and they said, “Yaḥyā ibn Abī’l-Muṭāʿ did not listen directly to al-ʿIrbāḍ, and he did not meet him, and this narration is faulty.” One of those who said that was Abū Zurʿah ad-Dimashqī, and he told that it was the view of Duḥaym. These people knew their own teachers better than others did, while al-Bukhārī had some faulty views in his *Tārīkh* about the traditions of the people of Shām. It [this hadith] has come from al-ʿIrbāḍ by other routes. It has been narrated in a hadith of Buraydah from the Prophet ﷺ

but the chain of transmission of Buraydah's hadith is not firmly established, and Allah knows best.

The saying of al-ʿIrbāḍ, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ admonished us with an admonition..." and in another version from Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī, [there is the addition of the word] "penetrating" [i.e. "a penetrating admonition"]. There is in their version that this happened after the morning prayer. The Prophet ﷺ used often to address his Companions outside of the regular addresses (*khuṭbah*), such as the addresses of the Jumuʿah and the *ʿĪds*. Allah, exalted is He, told him to do that when He said:

وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

"and warn them and speak to them with words that take effect,[6]"[7] and He says:

ادْعُ إِلِى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way."[8] However, he did not perpetually admonish them, but rather he would pay attention to them by admonishing them sometimes, as is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*

books that Abū Wā'il said, "Ibn Masʿūd used to remind us [with a discourse] every Thursday, and so a man said to him, 'Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, we love your discourse and have appetite for it, and we definitely would like it if you would give us a discourse every day.' He said in reply, 'The only thing that prevents me giving you discourses is a dislike for making you averse to it. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to pay attention to us with admonitions at particular times [and not all the time] for fear of causing us to loathe [discourses and admonitions].'"[9]

Eloquence is highly desirable in the discourse of admonition since that is closer to making people's hearts accept it and find it attractive. Eloquence is obtaining access to making others understand the intended meanings and delivering those meanings to the hearts of the listeners in the best form of words that convey the meanings, and in the most eloquent and sweetest manner for the listeners, and in the ways which are most likely to make them enter the heart. He ﷺ used to make his addresses short and would not make them lengthy, rather he was eloquent and concise.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Jābir ibn Samurah said, “I used to pray with the Prophet ﷺ and his prayer used to be moderate, and his address (*khuṭbah*) used to be moderate.”[10]

Abū Dāwūd narrated it, and his wording is, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used not to make his admonition lengthy on the day of Jumuʿah, but rather it was only a few simple words.”[11]

Muslim narrated the version that Abū Wā’il said, “‘ʿAmmār addressed us and he was concise and very eloquent. When he came down [from the minbar] we said, ‘Abū’l-Yaqẓān, you have been very eloquent and concise, but if only you had spoken at some length.’ He said, ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, “The length of a man’s *ṣalāh* and the shortness of his *khuṭbah* are things from which one knows his *fiqh* [understanding], so lengthen the *ṣalāh* and shorten the *khuṭbah*, because some rhetoric is magic.”’”[12]

Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated from the hadith of al-Ḥakam ibn Ḥazn that he said, “I witnessed the Jumuʿah with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He stood leaning on a staff or a bow, and then he praised Allah and eulogised him with some few wholesome and blessed words.”[13]

Abū Dāwūd narrated from ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ that one day a man stood and spoke at some length, and so ʿAmr said, “If he had been moderate in what he was saying it would have been better for him. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘I think that I should be...,’ or, ‘I was ordered to be brief in speech, because brevity is better.’”[14]

In his saying, “by which the eyes flowed with tears and the hearts became frightened,” these are two descriptions with which Allah praises the *mu’minūn* when they hear the remembrance, as He, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

“The *mu’minūn* are those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned,”[15] and He says:

وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

“Give good news to the humble-hearted, whose hearts quake at the mention of Allah,”[16] and He says:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَن تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

“Has the time not arrived for the hearts of those who have *īmān* to yield to the remembrance of Allah and to the truth He has sent down,”[17] and He says:

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

“Allah has sent down the Supreme Discourse, a Book consistent in its frequent repetitions. The skins of those who fear their Lord tremble at it and then their skins and hearts yield softly to the remembrance of Allah,”[18] and He says:

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ

“When they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they recognise of the truth.”[19]

His state ﷺ used to alter when he gave admonition, as Jābir said, “When the Prophet ﷺ addressed people, and he mentioned the Hour, then his anger became strong, his voice became louder, and his eyes became red, as if he was someone warning an army, saying, ‘[The enemy] has made a morning attack on you (*sabbaḥakum*) and an evening attack

(*massākum*).'" Muslim narrated it with the same meaning.[20]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ went out when the sun had declined from the zenith and prayed *Ẓuhr*. When he said the *salām* [that concludes the prayer], he stood on the minbar and mentioned the Hour, and that before it some tremendous matters would occur. Then he said, "Whoever wants to ask about something, then let him ask about it, for, by Allah! if you ask me about anything I will tell you about it as I stand here." Anas said, "People wept a great deal, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Ask me!' a great deal. A man stood and asked, 'Where will my entrance be, Messenger of Allah?' He answered, 'The Fire,'..." and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.[21]

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr that he gave an address in which he said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ giving an address and saying, 'I have warned you about the Fire! I have warned you about the Fire!' so much so that if there had been a man in the marketplace he would have heard it from my standing here." He said, "Until

his black cape, which had been over his shoulders, fell around his feet."[22]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that ʿAdī ibn Ḥātim said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Have *taqwā* of [fear and protect yourselves against] the Fire!'" He said, "And he turned his face away, and then he said, 'Have *taqwā* of [fear and protect yourselves against] the Fire!' Then he turned aside and turned his face away three times, until we thought that he was gazing at it [the Fire]. Then he said, 'Have *taqwā* of [fear and protect yourselves against] the Fire, even if it be with only half a date. Whoever cannot find [even that] then with a good word.'"[23]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn Salamah that ʿAlī or az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to address us and he would remind us of the Days of Allah to the extent that that would be recognised in his face as if he were someone warning a people that the matter would come to them early the next morning. When he had recently been with Jibrīl, he would not smile laughingly until he had ascended from him."[24]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Bazzār narrated a hadith that Jābir said, "When the revelation came to the Prophet

ﷺ or when he admonished people, I would say [to myself], 'The warner of a people to whom the punishment has come.' When that left him, I would see [him] the brightest of people facially, the one most given to laughing, and the best of them in being cheerful ﷺ."[25]

Their saying, "Messenger of Allah, it is as if it were a farewell admonition, so advise us," shows that he ﷺ conveyed in that admonition what he had not conveyed in any other, and for that reason they understood that it was a farewell admonition, because the one bidding farewell goes to the utmost degree in a way which others do not, in terms of words and deeds. For that reason, the Prophet ﷺ ordered that one should pray a prayer of leave-taking, because someone who perceives that he is taking leave with his prayer will go to the utmost lengths to make it perfect. It is most likely that some oblique reference to farewell slipped from him in that address, just as he referred to that obliquely in his *khuṭbah* on the Farewell Ḥajj, when he said, "I do not know. Perhaps I will not meet you after this year of mine," and he set about taking leave of people, and so they said, "This is the Farewell Ḥajj." When he returned from the Ḥajj to

Madīnah he assembled people at a body of water between Makkah and Madīnah called Khumm and addressed them saying, “People, I am only a mortal, and it is most likely that soon a messenger of my Lord will come and I will respond,” and then he urged people to hold firmly to the Book of Allah, and he counselled them about the people of his family. Muslim narrated it.[26]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books, and the wording is that of Muslim, that ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed over the dead of Uḥud, and then he ascended the minbar as someone taking leave of the living and the dead, and he said, ‘I go in advance of you to await you at the Pool (*ḥawḍ*), and its breadth is like that between Aylah and Juḥfah. I am not afraid that you will associate others as partners [with Allah] after me, but rather I am afraid of the world for you, and that you will compete for it, fight each other and so perish as those who were before you perished.” ʿUqbah said, “That was the last time I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the minbar.”[27]

Imam Aḥmad narrated it, and his wording is, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed the prayer over those who had died at Uḥud eight years later as if taking

leave of the living and the dead. Then he ascended the minbar and said, 'I go ahead to await you, and I am a witness against you, and your place of appointment is the Pool. I definitely look towards it. I do not fear *kufr* for you, but [I fear] *dunyā* in case you should compete with each other over it.'"[28]

Imam Aḥmad also narrated that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to us one day as if he were taking leave and he said, 'I am Muḥammad the unlettered prophet,' saying that three times, 'There is no prophet after me. I have been given the first parts of speech, its conclusions and its comprehensive and concise parts. I have learnt how many are the keepers of the Fire, and [how many] are the bearers of the Throne. My Lord has forgiven for my sake, and I have been granted security and my ummah have been granted security. So hear and obey as long as I remain among you, and then when I am taken away, you must hold to the Book of Allah, and regard as *ḥalāl* that which it makes *ḥalāl*, and regard as *ḥarām* that which it makes *ḥarām*.'"[29]

It seems probable that the *khuṭbah* which al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah indicated in his hadith was one of these

khuṭbahs, or closely resembling it, in that it was perceived as a leave-taking.

Their words, "so advise us," mean "with a comprehensive and sufficient advice", because when they understood that it was a farewell, they asked him to advise them in such a way as would benefit them to hold tight to after him, and which would be sufficient for whoever did hold tight to it, and a cause for happiness in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*.

In his saying ﷺ, "I advise you to have *taqwā* of Allah and to hear and obey..." these two phrases comprise happiness in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*.

As for *taqwā*, it is sufficient as a guarantee of happiness in the *ākhirah* for whoever holds tight to it. It is that which Allah instructs the early peoples and the later ones, as He says, exalted is He:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

"We have instructed those given the Book before you and you yourselves, to have *taqwā* of Allah."[30] We have previously given a commentary on the meaning of *taqwā* which is comprehensive and sufficient in

explanation of the hadith in which is the Prophet's ﷺ instruction to Muʿādh[31].

As for listening to and obeying the rulers of the Muslims, in that is the happiness of the *dunyā*, and by it all those matters which are of benefit and use to the slaves [of Allah] in their everyday lives are organised, and by it they seek help in order to make their *dīn* manifest and in order to obey their Lord, as ʿAlī ﷺ said, "People will only be put right by a leader who is right-acting or wicked. If he is wicked, the *mu'min* will worship his Lord by means of him, and the wicked one will be conveyed to his final end."[32]

Al-Ḥasan said about amirs, "They take charge of five of our affairs: the Jumuʿah and the congregational prayer [*jamāʿah*], the ʿĪd, the frontiers, and the *ḥadd* punishments. By Allah! the *dīn* will only be straight and effective by them, even if they are tyrannical and wrongdoing. By Allah! that which Allah puts right by means of them is more than that which they corrupt, although, by Allah! obedience to them is tough, but separating oneself from them is *kufr*."

Al-Khalāl narrated in the "*Kitāb al-imārah* (Book of Amirate) from the hadith of Abū Umāmah that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ commanded his Companions

when they had prayed *ʿIshā*', 'Assemble, because I have need of you.' When they finished the morning prayer, he asked, 'Have you assembled as I told you?' They answered, 'Yes.' He said three times, 'Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him! Have you grasped this?' We answered, 'Yes.' He said three times, 'Establish the prayer and produce the *zakāh*! Have you grasped this?' We answered, 'Yes.' He said three times, 'Hear and obey!' He said three times, 'Have you grasped this?'" He said, "We had thought that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was going to give a long discourse, but then we thought about his speech and [realised] that he had collected together the entire affair for us."[33]

It was with these two principles that the Prophet ﷺ also instructed [people] in his address on the Farewell Ḥajj, as Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated in the version of Umm al-Ḥuṣayn al-Aḥmasiyyah that she said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ giving the *khuṭbah* on the Farewell Ḥajj, and I heard him saying, 'People, have *taqwā* of Allah, and if a mutilated Ethiopian slave is given command over you then listen to him and obey as long as he establishes the Book of

Allah among you.'"[34] Muslim narrated that part of it which refers to listening and obeying.[35]

Imam Aḥmad and also *at-Tirmidhī* narrated the hadith that Abū Umāmah said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ giving the *khuṭbah* during the Farewell Ḥajj saying, 'Have *taqwā* of Allah, pray your five [prayers], fast your month, pay the *zakāh* on your wealth, and obey whoever has authority among you and you will enter the Garden of your Lord.'" In another version there is that he said, "People, there is no prophet after me, and no community [ummah] after you," and he mentioned the hadith with the same meaning.[36]

There is in the *Musnad* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever meets Allah without associating anything with Him, pays the *zakāh* on his wealth contentedly and anticipating [a reward from Allah], who listens and obeys, will have the Garden," or, "will enter the Garden."[37]

His saying ﷺ, "even if a slave is given command over you," and in another version, "an Ethiopian [slave]." This is that about which there are so many narrations from the Prophet ﷺ and it is that which the Prophet ﷺ came to know about his community's affair after him and that slaves would govern them. There is

in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Listen and obey, even if an Ethiopian slave, whose head is like a raisin, is employed as governor over you.”[38]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Abū Dharr ؓ said, “My close friend advised me to listen and to obey even if it is to an Ethiopian slave whose extremities are amputated.”[39] The hadith in this realm are very numerous.

This does not negate his saying ﷺ, “This command will remain with Quraysh as long as there are still two people,”[40] and his saying, “People follow Quraysh!”[41] and his saying, “The imams[42] are from Quraysh,”[43] because governance by slaves can come about by [their appointment by] an imam from Quraysh. What al-Ḥākim narrated bears witness to that, of the hadith of ʿAlī ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The imams are from Quraysh, their right-acting ones are the amirs over the right-acting ones, and the wicked ones will be amirs over the wicked ones, and each one has a right. Give everyone who has a due his due. Even if Quraysh give command over you to a mutilated Ethiopian slave, listen to him and obey.”[44] Its chain of transmission is excellent, but it is [also] narrated from

ʿAlī as a *mawqūf* statement, and ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "That is more likely."

Some have said that the Ethiopian slave is only mentioned by way of striking a simile, even though it is not permissible in actuality, as he also said, "Whoever builds a mosque even though it be like the nest of a sand grouse..."[45]

His saying ﷺ, "Whoever of you lives after me will see many disagreements, so you must take hold of my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided *khulafā*' who take the right way after me. Bite on it with the molar teeth." This is his foretelling ﷺ of that which would happen in his community after him: great numbers of disagreements in the principles of the *dīn* and in the derivative rulings, in word, deed and in matters of belief. This accords with that which is narrated from him about the division of his community into more than seventy groups, and that all of them are for the Fire except for one group, those who are based upon that on which he and his companions are based.[46] Similarly in this hadith there is the command that upon divisiveness and disagreement one must hold to his sunnah and the sunnah of the *khulafā*' who take the right way after

him. Sunnah is “the path travelled” and comprises holding firm to that upon which he and his *khulafā*’ who took the right way are based, of matters of belief, deeds and words. This is the complete Sunnah. For that reason the salaf of old did not use the term ‘Sunnah’ except for that which comprises all of the above. The same sense is narrated from al-Ḥasan, al-Awzāʿī and al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ.

Many of the later people of knowledge use the term ‘Sunnah’ especially for what is connected to matters of belief because they are the sources of the *dīn*, and because the one who is in disagreement concerning them is in terrible danger. In mentioning this passage after ordering us to listen and obey people in authority there is an indication that obedience is only due to people in authority in what is obedience to Allah, as it is authentically narrated that he said, “Obedience is only with respect to right and good action [*maʿrūf*].”[47]

In the *Musnad* there is from Anas that Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, “Messenger of Allah, what is your view if there should be rulers over us who do not take on your Sunnah as their customary practice, and do not base themselves on your orders; then what do you command with respect to them?” The Messenger of

Allah ﷻ said, “There is no obedience due to someone who does not obey Allah ﷻ.”[48]

Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Men will take charge of your affairs after me who will extinguish some of the Sunnah and act by innovations, and who will delay the prayer outside of its times.” I asked, “Messenger of Allah, if I reach them, what shall I do?” He replied, “There is no obedience due to someone who disobeys Allah.”[49]

In his command to follow his Sunnah and the Sunnah of the *khulafā*’ who take the right way, after his having commanded to listen to and obey those who have charge of matters in general, there is an indication that the Sunnah of the *khulafā*’ who take the right way is to be followed just as his Sunnah is to be followed, as opposed to other rulers who take charge of affairs.

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad and in the *Jāmiʿ at-Tirmidhī* that Ḥudhayfah said, “We were seated with the Prophet ﷺ and he said, ‘I do not know what is the extent of my time remaining among you, so model yourselves on the two who will be after me,’ and he indicated Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, ‘and hold

firmly to the bidding of ʿAmmār, and whatever Ibn Masʿūd narrates to you, you should believe,'" and in another version, "'and hold firmly to the bidding of Ibn Umm ʿAbd [Ibn Masʿūd] and allow yourselves to be guided by the guidance of ʿAmmār.'"[50] So that at the end of his life ﷺ he stated those who should be used as exemplars after him. The *khulafā'* who took the right way whom he ordered should be taken as exemplars are Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī, because in the hadith of Safīnah from the Prophet ﷺ there is, "The *khilāfah* after me will be thirty years, and then it will become a kingdom."[51] Imam Aḥmad declared it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, and used it as argument on behalf of the caliphates of the [above-mentioned] four.

Many imams state openly that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was also a *khalīfah* who took the right way. That, which Imam Aḥmad narrates from the hadith of Ḥudhayfah, also shows this, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Prophethood will be among you as long as Allah wills that it should be, and then Allah will remove it when He wills to remove it. Then it will be a khalifate on the [model of] the clear open road of prophethood, which will endure for as long as Allah wills that it endures. Then when Allah wills to remove it He will remove it.

Then later it will become a biting kingdom for as long as Allah wills that it should be, and then when Allah wills to remove it He will remove it. Then it will be a tyrannical kingdom for as long as Allah wills that it should be. Then when Allah wills to remove it He will remove it. Then it will become a khalifate on the [model of] the clear open road of prophethood," and then he was silent. When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was appointed, a man went in to him and told him this hadith, and it made him very happy and amazed.[52]

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn used sometimes to be asked about some drinks, and he would say, "The imam of guidance forbade them: ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz."

People of knowledge differ concerning whether the consensus of the four *khulafā*' is a consensus or a decisive proof even though other Companions disagree with them. Concerning this there are two narrations from Imam Aḥmad. Abū Khāzim al-Ḥanafī, at the time of al-Muʿtaḍid, gave the judgement that close relatives on the woman's side inherit, and he did not take any account of whoever contradicted the *khulafā*', and his judgement of that was executed in all the countries.

Let us consider if one of the *khulafā*' had said something and none of the others disagreed with him,

but one of the other Companions contradicted him, then does his position take precedence over anyone else's position? On this there are also two statements from the people of knowledge. The stated position of Aḥmad is that his statement is given preference over the statement of anyone else of the Companions. That is what al-Khaṭṭābi and others mentioned, and the words of most of the right-acting first generations show that, particularly with respect to ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ because it is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways that he said, "Allah has put the truth on the tongue of ʿUmar and in his heart."[53] ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to follow his judgements, and he sought to support that by the words of the Prophet ﷺ "Allah has put the truth on the tongue of ʿUmar and in his heart."

Mālik said, "'ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and those who took the command after him laid down Sunnahs, to take hold of which is to hold fast to the Book of Allah, and is strength for the *dīn* of Allah. No one has the right to alter them or change them, nor to investigate any matter which contradicts them. Whoever is guided by them is [truly] guided. Whoever seeks help by means

of them will be helped. Whoever abandons them and follows the path of anyone other than the *mu'minūn*, Allah will turn him over to that which he has turned and roast him in Jahannam, and how evil that is as an ultimate end.'" ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam told that Mālik said, "'Umar's resolution about that pleased me," meaning about this speech. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī narrated this wording from Mālik and he did not say that it was from ʿUmar.

Khalf ibn Khalīfah said, "I witnessed ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz addressing people while he was *khalīfah*, and he said in his address, 'Pay attention! that which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his two companions laid down as Sunnah is a function of the *dīn* to which we adhere and resort.'" Abū Nuʿaym narrated the hadith of ʿArzab al-Kindī that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Some things will originate after me, and the most beloved of them to me is that you should cling to that which ʿUmar originates."

ʿAlī used to follow his rulings and judgements, saying, "'Umar took the right way in the affair."

Ashʿath narrated that ash-Shaʿbī said, "Whenever people differ about something, then look at what ʿUmar decided about it, because he would not pass

judgement on a matter on which judgement had not been passed before without taking counsel."

Mujāhid said, "Whenever people differ about something then look at what ʿUmar did and adhere to it." Ayyūb narrated that ash-Shaʿbī said, "Look at whatever the community of Muḥammad have agreed upon, because Allah would not let them agree on error. When they disagree, then look at what ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has done and adhere to it."

ʿIkrimah was asked about the *umm walad*,[54] and he said, "She is set free upon the death of her master." Someone asked him, "On what basis do you say that?" He replied, "The Qur'ān." He asked, "What [part of the] Qur'ān?" He answered:

أَطِيعُواْ اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ

"'Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in command among you,'[55] and ʿUmar was one of those in command."

Wakīʿ said, "Whenever ʿUmar and ʿAlī are united on something, that is the matter!"

It is narrated that Ibn Masʿūd used to swear by Allah that the Straight Path is that on which ʿUmar

was established and firm until he entered the Garden.

In any case, there is no doubt that that for which ʿUmar gathered the Companions and upon which they were united during his time is the truth, even if whoever did so after that opposed and contradicted it, for example, his judicial decision concerning issues of the fixed shares of inheritance such as the adjustment of the fixed shares, and concerning the [case when there are a] husband and two parents or a wife and two parents that the mother has a third of the remainder, and such as his judicial decision about someone who had sexual intercourse while in his *iḥrām* [on Ḥajj] that he must carry on with his rites [of the Ḥajj] and must then perform [another Ḥajj in] place [of the one he ruined] and sacrifice an animal, and such as his judicial decision about the wife of someone who has gone missing about which other *khulafā*' also agreed with him, and like that upon which he united people on the matter of the triple divorce, and on the prohibition of the *mutʿah* [temporary] marriage to women, and for example his act in drawing up the *dīwān* registers [of the populace], his imposition of the *kharāj* tax on the lands conquered by force, and his contract of

protection with the people of the *dhimmah* [the people of the Book who negotiated with him] with the conditions which he stipulated for them, etc.

Something which bears witness to the soundness of that for which ʿUmar in his time gathered the Companions [to seek their counsel] and upon which they agreed and did not disagree, is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "I saw myself in a dream drawing from a well, and then Abū Bakr came and drew a leather bucket of water or two, and there was some weakness in his drawing and Allah will forgive him. Then Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came and it was transformed into a large leather bucket, and I have not seen anyone doing as he has done, so much until the people's [thirsts] were satisfied, and they lay down around the well." In another version there is, "I have not seen a chief of the people drawing water as did ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb," and in another version, "until he turned away while the pool was overflowing."[56]

This is an indication that ʿUmar did not die until affairs had been placed in their appropriate places, and matters were rightly directed. That is because of the length of time [in which he was khalifah], and his total occupation with new cases that took place, and

his concern for them, contrary to the period of Abū Bakr because that was short, in which he was occupied with openings [created by *jihād* in new lands] and sending out military forces to fight, so that he was not able to be completely occupied with the new cases that took place. It is quite likely that things took place in his epoch which did not reach him, and were not brought to his attention, until these matters were brought to the attention of ʿUmar, and so he brought people back to the truth respecting them and interpreted them correctly.

As for those matters for which ʿUmar did not assemble people [to take their counsel], but rather in which he had his own view, and he regarded it as allowable for others [of the Companions] to have a view contrary to his, such as the issues [in the laws of inheritance] concerning the grandfather [being alive to inherit] along with brothers, and the issue of irrevocable divorce, for in these things the position ʿUmar took is no proof against other Companions, and Allah knows best.

The *khulafā'* are only described as those who took the right way (*rāshidūn*) because they knew the truth and decided on the basis of it. The one who takes the

right way (*rāshid*) is the opposite of the deviant (*ghāwī*), for the deviant is someone who knows the truth and acts contrary to it.

In one version there is "rightly guided – *mahdiyyīn*"; it means that Allah guides them to the truth, and does not mislead them away from it. So, there are three categories: someone who takes the right way, someone who is deviant and someone who is misled. The one who takes the right way is someone who recognises the truth and follows it. The deviant is the one who recognises it and does not follow it. The misled person does not recognise it [the truth] at all. Every one who takes the right way (*rāshid*) is rightly guided (*mahdī*), and every one who is guided with complete guidance takes the right way, because guidance is only complete with recognition of the truth and action in accordance with it.

His saying, "Bite on it with the molar teeth," is an expression denoting taking hold of it with real strength. The molar teeth are the lateral teeth [excluding the incisors].

His saying, "Beware of newly introduced matters, for every innovation is a straying," is a warning to the community against following innovated new matters.

He emphasised that with his words, “every innovation is a straying.” What is meant by innovation are those things which are newly introduced having no source in the *Sharīʿah* proving them. As for whatever has a source in the *Sharīʿah* proving it, then it is not an innovation in the *Sharīʿah*, even though it might linguistically be an innovation. So, there is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his *khuṭbah*, “The best discourse is the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, and the worst of affairs are those which are newly introduced, for every innovation is an error.”[57]

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Kathīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Muzanī – in whom there is weakness – from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever innovates an innovation of error with which Allah and His Messenger are not pleased, will have upon him the like of the wrong actions of whoever acts according to it without that decreasing anything of their burdens.”[58]

Imam Aḥmad narrated in a version from Ghaḍīf ibn al-Ḥārith ath-Thumālī that he said, “ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān sent to me saying, ‘We have gathered people together upon two matters: raising the hands on the

minbars on the day of Jumuʿah and giving discourses after the morning and afternoon prayers.'" So he said, "As to these two, they are the best of your innovations in my view, and I will not respond to you in anything of them, because the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Whenever people introduce an innovation, then the like of it in the Sunnah is removed.' So holding strongly to the Sunnah is better than introducing an innovation."[59] The like of this has been narrated of Ibn ʿUmar as his own words.

So his saying ﷺ, "Every innovation is a straying," is one of the examples of concise and yet comprehensive speech which omits nothing, and it is one of the tremendous principles of the *dīn*, closely resembling, "Whoever introduces into this affair of ours that which is not of it, then it is rejected." Every person who introduces something and ascribes it to the *dīn* without having any source in the *dīn* to refer back to, then that is an error, and the *dīn* is free of it, whether it is in the articles of *īmān* (*ʿaqīdah*), deeds or words, outward or inward.

As for those things in the sayings of the right-acting first generations where they regard some innovations as good, that is only with respect to what are

innovations in the linguistic sense, but not in the *Sharīʿah*. An example of that is the saying of ʿUmar ﷺ when he had united people to stand in prayer (*tarāwīḥ*) in Ramaḍān behind a single imam in the mosque, and then he came in behind them while they were praying and said, “What an excellent innovation this is!” It is also narrated that he said, “If this is an innovation, then what an excellent innovation!”[60] It is narrated that Ubayy ibn Kaʿb said to him, “This did not use to happen,” and ʿUmar said, “I know, but it is good,” meaning that this action was not done in this way before that time, but it has sources in the *Sharīʿah* from which it is derived, for example that the Prophet ﷺ used to urge people to stand in prayer in Ramaḍān, and stimulate people’s desire to do it, and people, in his time, used to stand in prayer in the mosque in different groups and individually, and he ﷺ prayed with his companions in Ramaḍān more than one night, and then stopped doing that, giving as the reason that he feared that it would be made obligatory for them and that they would be incapable of undertaking it, but there was no fear of this [that it would be regarded as an obligation] after him ﷺ. It has also been narrated of him that he used to stand in prayer

with his companions in the uneven nights among the last ten.[61]

Another source is that he ﷺ commanded us to follow the Sunnah of the *khulafā*' who took the right way, and this has become the Sunnah of his *khulafā*' who took the right way since people unanimously agreed about it in the times of ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī.

Another example of that is the first call to prayer[62] on the Jumuʿah which ʿUthmān added because of people's need of it and which ʿAlī affirmed, and which has become the continued practice of the Muslims. It has been narrated that Ibn ʿUmar said, "It is an innovation," but it is very likely that he meant the same as his father meant about standing for prayer in Ramaḍān [in *jamāʿah*].

There is similarly, the compilation of the *muṣḥaf* [written copy of the Qur'ān] in one book about which Zayd ibn Thābit was hesitant, saying to Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, "How can the two of you do something which the Prophet ﷺ did not do?" Then he came to realise that it was a matter of benefit (*maslahah*), and he agreed to compile it.[63] The Prophet ﷺ had commanded that the revelation should be written

down, and there is no difference in writing it down separately [in different places] or collectedly [in one book], and on the contrary, gathering it all together in one is more expedient and useful.

Similar to that is ʿUthmān's having united the community on one *muṣḥaf* copy of the Qur'ān and his ordering the destruction of whatever disagreed with it from fear of the community's division into groups. ʿAlī and most of the Companions regarded it as a good act, and that was truly a matter of benefit.

Similarly there is the fight against the people who refused to pay the *zakāh*. ʿUmar and others were hesitant and in doubt about it until Abū Bakr explained to him the source in the *Sharīʿah* from which it is derived, and so the people agreed with him about that.

Similarly, there is giving discourses, and we have seen previously the saying of Ghadif ibn al-Ḥārith that it is an innovation, but al-Ḥasan said, "Discoursing is an innovation, and an excellent innovation. How many a supplication is answered, need fulfilled, and brother benefitted." These people only meant that it was an innovation in the form of gathering people together for it at a specific time, because the Prophet ﷺ did not

have a specific time to discourse to his companions other than the regular khutbahs during the Jumuʿah and *ʿĪd* prayers, and otherwise he would only remind them occasionally or when something happened which necessitated that he should remind them. Then later the Companions reached a consensus that a specific time should be fixed for it, as we have seen previously that Ibn Masʿūd used to remind his people every Thursday.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that Ibn ʿAbbās said, "Give discourse to people once a week, but if you refuse [to do so little] then twice, and if you do more, then three times, but do not tire people."[64]

There is in the *Musnad* that ʿĀ'ishah advised the discoursers of the people of Madīnah in a similar fashion. It is narrated that she said to ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr, "Give discourse to the people one day, and leave them alone one day; do not tire them."[65] It is narrated that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz told the man who gave discourse to do so once every three days. It is narrated that he said, "Give people some rest and do not make it too heavy for them, and avoid discourse on Saturday and Tuesday."

Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuʿaym narrated with his chain of transmission from Ibrāhīm ibn al-Junayd [Ḥarmalah ibn Yaḥyā told us] that he said, "I heard ash-Shāfiʿī ﵀ saying, 'There are two types of innovation: praiseworthy and blameworthy innovations. That which accords with the Sunnah is praiseworthy. That which contradicts the Sunnah is blameworthy,' and he sought to prove it by the saying of ʿUmar, 'What an excellent innovation it is!'"[66]

What ash-Shāfiʿī meant ﵀ is that which we have mentioned before, that blameworthy innovation is that which has no source in the *Sharīʿah* from which it is derived, and it is unqualified innovation in the *Sharīʿah*. As for praiseworthy innovation it is that which is in accordance with the Sunnah, meaning that which has a source in the Sunnah from which it is derived, and it is only an innovation in the linguistic sense rather than in the sense of the *Sharīʿah* since it accords with the Sunnah.

Other words have been narrated from ash-Shāfiʿī in explanation of this, that he said, "There are two types of newly introduced matters: that which is introduced which is contrary to the Book and the Sunnah, or to a tradition [from someone among the right-acting first

generations] or something on which there is consensus, then this innovation is an error. That which is newly introduced of good actions and which does not contradict any of the above, then this newly introduced matter is not blameworthy."

Many of the matters which were newly introduced and had not previously existed, the people of knowledge disagreed as to whether or not they were good innovations until they referred back to the Sunnah, for example, writing down hadith, which ʿUmar and a group of the Companions forbade, but for which the majority gave licence seeking proof for that from hadith from the Sunnah.

Another example is writing the explanation of the hadith and of the Qur'ān, of which some people among the people of knowledge disapprove and for which many allowed licence.

Another example is the recording of views concerning what is *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* and the like, and in going to lengths in discussing behaviour and acts of the hearts, which have not been narrated of any of the Companions and Followers, and the majority of which Imam Aḥmad disapproved.

In these times in which we are so far away from the knowledges and sciences of the right-acting first generations, it is called for specifically that we should detail everything of that that has been transmitted from them so that we can distinguish what science and knowledge existed in their time from that which was originated after them, so that the Sunnah can be clearly known from innovation.

It is authentically transmitted that Ibn Masʿūd said, "You have got up this morning in the natural condition (*fitrah*), and you will introduce matters and matters will be introduced for you. Whenever you see a newly introduced matter you must take to the original guidance."[67] Ibn Masʿūd said this in the time of the *khulafā' ar-rāshidūn* ﷺ.

Ibn Mahdī narrated that Mālik said, "There were none of these erroneous opinions (*ahwā'*) in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān," as if Mālik was indicating by 'erroneous opinions' the divisions that originated in the source matters of the *dīn* such as the Khawārij, the Shīʿah, the Murji'ah and the likes, of those who spoke declaring some of the Muslims to be *kāfirūn*, and regarded it as permissible to shed their blood and seize their property, or

thinking that they would be eternally in the Fire, or regarded the elite of this community as deviants, or on the contrary claiming that acts of disobedience don't harm their doers, or that none of the people of *tawḥīd* would enter the Fire.

Worse than that is what has been introduced of speaking concerning the acts of Allah, exalted is He, such as His Universal and Specific Decree, which those [Qadariyyah proponents of free will] who deny do so, claiming that by that he is purifying Allah from [the ascription of] tyrannical injustice.

Worse than that is that which has been introduced of speaking about the essence of Allah and His attributes, of those matters about which the Prophet ﷺ his companions and their followers in good actions were silent. Some people negated and denied a great deal of that which is in the Book and the Sunnah about that, and they claimed that they do that in order to purify Allah of those things which intellects require Him to be purified. They claimed that the necessary consequences of that are impossible for Allah ﷻ. There are also people who were not contented with establishing Him firmly until they established firmly by establishing Him that which is thought that it is

inseparable from Him with respect to created beings, and on these inseparable items, both in negation and affirmation, the first of this community followed the course of remaining silent about them.

One of the things which was introduced into this community after the age of the Companions and the Followers was discussion about *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* purely from personal opinion, and rejection of a great deal of that which is in the Sunnah concerning that because it contradicts thinking and intellectual analogical reasoning.

One of the things which originated after that was discussion of the reality (*ḥaqīqah*) concerning tasting (*dhawq*) and unveiling (*kashf*), and the claim that the *ḥaqīqah* negates the *Sharīʿah*, and that gnosis (*maʿrifah*) alone is sufficient along with love, and that there is no need for deeds which are a veil, or that only the common people need the *Sharīʿah*, all of which is often connected to discussion of the essence and the attributes in a way which is known absolutely to contradict the Book and the Sunnah and the consensus of the right-acting first generations of the community, and Allah guides whomever He wills to a straight path.

1 “To admonish” has the sense of urging and counselling, as well as warning. Trans.

2 The *khulāfā’* mentioned here have two attributes: *rāshidīn*, they take the right way, and *mahdiyyīn*, they are rightly guided. Thus the *khulafā’ ar-rāshidūn* are literally the *khulafā’* who took the right way. Trans.

3 This means that in the versions of Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad, Khālid ibn Maʿdān narrated from both ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAmr as-Sulamī and Ḥujr ibn Ḥujr al-Kilāʿī both of whom narrated the hadith from al-ʿIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyah. Ed.

4 Ibn Mājah (43), Aḥmad (4:126)

5 Ibn Mājah in *as-Sunan* (42)

6 Literally, “and say to them penetrating words that reach their selves.” Trans.

7 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 63

8 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 125

9 Al-Bukhārī (68), Muslim (2821) and others

10 Muslim (866)

11 Abū Dāwūd (1107)

12 Muslim (869), Aḥmad and others

13 Abū Dāwūd (1096) and Aḥmad (4:212), also Abū Yaʿlā, al-Bayhaqī and aṭ-Ṭabarānī

14 Abū Dāwūd (5008)

15 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 2

16 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 34-35

17 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 16

18 Sūrat az-Zumar: 23

19 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 83

20 Muslim (867), also Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbān

21 Al-Bukhārī (4621), Muslim (2359)

22 Aḥmad (4:268), ad-Dārimī and Ibn Ḥibbān

23 Al-Bukhārī (6023), Muslim (1016) and others

24 Aḥmad (1:167)

25 Al-Bazzār (2477)

26 Muslim (2408)

27 Al-Bukhārī (1344), Muslim (2296)

28 Aḥmad (4:154)

29 Aḥmad (2:172)

30 Sūrat an-Nisā': 131

31 Hadith 18

32 Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *Muṣannaf* (15:328)

33 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (8:162)

34 At-Tirmidhī (1706) and Aḥmad (6:402)

35 Muslim (1298)

36 At-Tirmidhī (616) and Aḥmad (5:251)

37 Aḥmad (2:361)

38 Al-Bukhārī (7142)

39 Muslim (648)

40 Al-Bukhārī (2195), Muslim (1820) and others

41 Al-Bukhārī (3495) and Muslim (1818)

42 i.e. *khulafā'*. Trans.

43 Aḥmad (3:192) and authenticated by al-Ḥākim (4:501)

44 Al-Ḥākim (4:75-76)

45 Ibn Mājah (738), Ibn Abī Shaybah (1:310)

46 At-Tirmidhī (2641)

47 Al-Bukhārī (4340), Muslim (1840) and others

48 Aḥmad (3:213)

49 Ibn Mājah (2865)

50 At-Tirmidhī (3663), Ibn Mājah (97) amd Aḥmad (382)

51 Abū Dāwūd (4637) and Aḥmad (5:220)

52 Aḥmad (4:273)

53 Aḥmad (2:401) and Ibn Abī Shaybah (12:25)

54 *Umm walad*: a slave woman who gives birth to her master's child. She may not be sold and becomes free on the death of her master. Trans.

55 Sūrat an-Nisā': 59

56 Al-Bukhārī (3633), Muslim (2392) and others

57 Muslim (867)

58 At-Tirmidhī (2677), Ibn Mājah (209)

59 Aḥmad (4:105)

60 Al-Bukhārī (2010) and Mālik in his *Muwaṭṭa'* (1:114)

61 Abū Dāwūd (1375), at-Tirmidhī (806) and an-Nasā'ī (3:202)

62 The first and only call to prayer for Jumuʿah during the Prophet's time ﷺ was when the Imam sat on the mimbar but another was added at the time of ʿUthmān when the population of the Muslims grew. This is narrated by al-Bukhārī (912) and many others.

63 Al-Bukhārī (4986)

64 Al-Bukhārī (6337)

65 Aḥmad (6:217)

66 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (9:113)

67 Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī in *as-Sunnah* (80)

الحديث التاسع والعشرون

عَنْ مُعَاذٍ ﷺ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! أَخْبِرْنِي بِعَمَلٍ يُدْخِلُنِي الْجَنَّةَ، وَيُبَاعِدُنِي مِنَ النَّارِ، قَالَ: ﴿لَقَدْ سَأَلْتَنِي عَنْ عَظِيمٍ، وَإِنَّهُ لَيَسِيرٌ عَلَى مَنْ يَسَّرَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ، تَعْبُدُ اللهَ لا تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلاةَ، وَتُؤْتِي الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجُّ الْبَيْتَ﴾.

ثُمَّ قَالَ: ﴿أَلا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى أَبْوَابِ الْخَيْرِ؟ الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ، وَالصَّدَقَةُ تُطْفِئُ الْخَطِيئَةَ كَمَا يُطْفِئُ الْمَاءُ النَّارَ، وَصَلاةُ الرَّجُلِ مِنْ جَوْفِ اللَّيْلِ﴾، ثُمَّ تَلا:]تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ[، حَتَّى بَلَغَ]يَعْمَلُونَ[.

ثُمَّ قَالَ: ﴿أَلا أُخْبِرُكَ بِرَأْسِ الأَمْرِ، وَعَمُودِهِ، وَذِرْوَةِ سَنَامِهِ؟﴾ قُلْتُ: بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! قَالَ: ﴿رَأْسُ الأَمْرِ الإِسْلامُ، وَعَمُودُهُ الصَّلاةُ، وَذِرْوَةُ سَنَامِهِ الْجِهَادُ﴾.

ثُمَّ قَالَ: ﴿أَلا أُخْبِرُكَ بِمِلاكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ؟﴾ قُلْتُ: بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، فَأَخَذَ بِلِسَانِهِ، قَالَ: ﴿كُفَّ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا﴾، قُلْتُ: يَا نَبِيَّ اللهِ! وَإِنَّا لَمُؤَاخَذُونَ بِمَا نَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ؟ فَقَالَ: ﴿ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ، وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ، أَوْ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ إِلاَّ حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ﴾. رَوَاهُ التِّرمِذِيُّ، وَ قَالَ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ .

A Comprehensive Hadith on Action

uʿādh ibn Jabal ﷺ said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah tell me about an action which will enter me into the Garden and remove me far from the Fire’. He said, ‘You have

asked about a tremendous thing, and it is easy for one for whom Allah, exalted is He, makes it easy: [it is] that you worship Allah without associating anything with Him, establish prayer, produce *Zakāt*, fast Ramaḍān, and perform Ḥajj of the House'. Then he said, 'Shall I not show you the doors of good? Fasting is a shield, and *ṣadaqah* extinguishes wrong action as water extinguishes fire, and the prayer of a man in the middle of the night,' and then he recited:

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تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ ... بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

'Their sides eschew their beds' until he reached, '... for what it used to do.'[1] Then he said, 'Shall I not tell you about the head of the matter, its central pillar and the uppermost part of its hump?' I said, 'Yes, Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'The head of the matter is Islam, and its central pillar is prayer, and the uppermost part of its hump is *jihād*.' Then he said, 'Shall I not tell you of the foundation (*milāk*) of all of that?' I said, 'Yes, Messenger of Allah.' He took hold of his tongue and said, 'Restrain this.' I said, 'Prophet of Allah, are we taken to task for what we talk about?' And he said, 'May your mother be bereft of you, Muʿādh! Does anything throw people into the Fire on their faces' – or he said, 'on their nostrils' – 'except the

harvest of their tongues?'" At-Tirmidhī related it [2616] and said, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith."

Imam Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah[2] narrated this hadith in the version of Maʿmar from ʿĀṣim ibn Abī'n-Najūd from Abū Wā'il from Muʿādh ibn Jabal. At-Tirmidhī said, "Good, *ṣaḥīḥ*."

Respecting that which he said there are some other views from two different aspects:

First, that it is not reliably established that Abū Wā'il listened to Muʿādh even if he did possibly live contemporaneously with him, since Muʿādh was in Syria and Abū Wā'il was in Kufa, and the imams – such as Aḥmad and others – continue to try to show the impossibility of his having listened [to him] by the like of this. Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said concerning Abū Wā'il's having listened to Abū ad-Dardā', "He lived at the same time, and he lived at Kufa and Abū'd-Dardā' in Syria," meaning that it is not authentic that he could have listened to him. Abū Zurʿah ad-Dimashqī told that some people hesitate concerning [the possibility of] Abū Wā'il having listened to ʿUmar, or they reject it, so his having listened to Muʿādh is more unlikely.

Second, that Ḥammād ibn Salamah narrated it from ʿĀṣim ibn Abī'n-Najūd from Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Muʿādh, which Imam Aḥmad narrated in an abbreviated form. Ad-Dāraquṭnī said that it is more likely to be correct

because the hadith is well known in the version of Shahr despite a disagreement over him in it.

I say that the version of Shahr from Muʿādh is certainly a *mursal* hadith, and that there is disagreement about the trustworthiness of Shahr and his weakness. Imam Aḥmad narrated it in a version of Shahr from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam from Muʿādh, and Imam Aḥmad also narrated it in a version from ʿUrwah ibn an-Nazzal or an-Nazzal ibn ʿUrwah and Maymūn ibn Abī Shabīb, both of them from Muʿādh, whereas neither ʿUrwah nor Maymūn listened directly to Muʿādh. It has many other paths from Muʿādh all of which are weak.

His saying, "Tell me about an action which will enter me into the Garden and remove me far from the Fire." We have previously seen in the commentary of the twenty-second hadith in very well established ways from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah and Abū Ayyūb and others, that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about issues the like of this, and he answered similarly to how he answered here in the hadith of Muʿādh.

In the version of Imam Aḥmad in the hadith of Muʿādh there is that he said, “Messenger of Allah, I want to ask you about a phrase which has made me ill, made me sick and made me sorrowful.” He said, “Ask whatever you want.” He said, “Tell me about an action which will enter me into the Garden; I will not ask you about anything else.” This shows Muʿādh’s extreme concern ﷺ for right actions. In it there is also a proof that actions are a cause of entering the Garden, as He, exalted is He, says:

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“That is the Garden you will inherit for what you did.”[3]

As for his saying, “None of you will enter the Garden by means of his action,”[4] what is meant – and Allah knows best – is that by action alone no one is worthy of entering the Garden, if it were not that Allah made it – by His overflowing bounty and mercy – a cause for that. Action itself is from the mercy of Allah and His overflowing bounty to His slave, so that the causes of entering the Garden are all from the overflowing bounty of Allah and His mercy.

His saying, “You have asked about a tremendous thing.” We have seen previously, in the commentary on the hadith indicated, that the Prophet ﷺ said to the man who asked him about something similar to this, “Indeed,

although you have been concise in your question then you have judged it to be of great importance and have far-reaching consequences," and that is because entrance into the Garden and salvation from the Fire is an extremely vast matter, and because of it Allah revealed the Book and sent the Messengers. The Prophet ﷺ asked a man, "How do you speak when you pray?" He answered, "I ask Allah for the Garden and I seek refuge with Him from the Fire, and I do not do very well the murmuring which you and Muʿādh do," indicating the great number of their supplications and their exertion in supplicating. So the Prophet ﷺ said, "About it [asking for the Garden and seeking refuge from the Fire] we murmur," and in another version, "Is my murmuring and the murmuring of Muʿādh to any other end than that we ask Allah for the Garden and we seek refuge with Him from the Fire?"[5]

His saying, "And it is easy for one for whom Allah, exalted is He, makes it easy," indicates that all right direction towards success is in the hand of Allah ﷻ so that for whomever Allah makes guidance easy will be guided, and for whom He does not make it easy will not find that easy. Allah, exalted is He, says:

فَأَمَّا مَن أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى وَأَمَّا مَن بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى

“As for him who gives out and has *taqwā* and confirms the Good, We will pave his way to Ease. But as for him who is stingy and self-satisfied, and denies the Good, We will pave his way to Difficulty.”[6] And he said ﷺ, “Act! for each one is eased to that for which he is created. As for the people of [ultimate] happiness, they will have the actions of the people of happiness made easy for them. As for the people of [ultimate] grief, they will have the actions of the people of grief made easy for them.” Then he recited ﷺ this *āyah*.[7] The Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

وَاهْدِنِي وَيَسِّرِ الْهُدَى لِي

“Guide me and make guidance easy for me.”[8] Allah tells us that His prophet Mūsā عليه السلام said in his supplication:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

“O Lord, expand my breast for me and make my task easy for me.”[9] Ibn ʿUmar used to supplicate saying:

اَللَّهُمَّ يَسِّرْنِي لِلْيُسْرَى وَجَنِّبْنِي الْعُسْرَى

“O Allah, ease me to Ease, and turn me away from Difficulty.”

We have seen previously, in the commentary on the hadith indicated, how it was shown that entering the Garden is consequential upon producing the five pillars of Islam, which are: *tawḥīd*, prayer, *zakāh*, fasting and Ḥajj.

His saying, "Shall I not show you the doors of good?" Since entrance into the Garden is predicated on the obligations and duties of Islam, then after that he pointed him to the doors of good consisting of optional actions, because the best of the close friends of Allah are those who are brought near, who draw near to Him by optional extra acts after performance of the obligations.

His saying, "Fasting is a shield." This saying is firmly established as that of the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways. They narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ. Imam Aḥmad narrated it with an extra phrase, "Fasting is a shield and an impregnable fortress against the Fire."[10]

He narrated in a hadith of ʿUthmān ibn Abī'l-ʿĀṣ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Fasting is a shield against the Fire, just like the shield of any of you against fighting."[11]

There is in a hadith from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Our Lord ﷻ said, 'Fasting is a shield by which the slave becomes protected from the Fire."[12]

Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated a hadith of Abū ʿUbaydah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Fasting is a shield as long as one does not pierce it," and his saying, "as long as

one does not pierce it," means with evil speech and the like. For this reason there is in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from the Prophet ﷺ, "Fasting is a shield, so when it is the day for any of you to fast, let him not be indecent, nor behave ignorantly, and if a man abuses him, let him say, 'I am a man who is fasting.'"

One of the right-acting first generations said, "Backbiting pierces the fast, and asking forgiveness patches it up, so whoever of you is able to produce a fast which is not pierced then let him do so."

Ibn al-Munkadir said, "When the fasting person backbites he pierces, and when he seeks forgiveness he patches."

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with a chain of transmission about which there are some views from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūᶜ* hadith, "Fasting is a shield as long as one does not pierce it." Someone asked, "How can it be pierced?" He replied, "With lying and backbiting."[13]

So the shield is that with which the slave protects himself, just like the shield with which he protects himself from blows during fighting. Similarly, fasting protects the person who uses it from acts of disobedience in the world, as Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“You who have *īmān*! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you – so that hopefully you will have *taqwā* [literally: protect yourselves].”[14] So if one has a shield against acts of disobedience, then one has a shield in the next life against the Fire. If one does not have shield against acts of disobedience in the world, then one has no shield in the next life against the Fire.

Ibn Mardawayh narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿAlī that he said, “Allah sent Yaḥyā ibn Zakariyyā’ to Banī Isrā’īl with five phrases,” and he mentioned the hadith in full. In it there is, “Allah tells you to fast. The likeness of that is a man who walks towards his enemy having taken a shield for the fight, so that he is not afraid of him from whatever direction he comes.” He narrated it in another fashion from ʿAlī as a *mawqūf* statement, and in that he said, “The likeness of the fast is a man whom people defend, and so he sharpens his weapon so much so he believes that the enemy’s weapon cannot reach him. Similarly, fasting is a shield.”[15]

His saying, “And *ṣadaqah* extinguishes wrong action as water extinguishes fire.” This wording is narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many other ways. Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it in the hadith of Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Fasting is an inaccessible shield, and *ṣadaqah* extinguishes wrong action as water extinguishes fire.”[16]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated it in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas in the same sense.

At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Secret *ṣadaqah* definitely extinguishes the wrath of the Lord, and protects against an evil death."[17]

It is narrated of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn that he used to carry bread on his back at night following the extremely poor in the darkness of the night, saying, "*Ṣadaqah* in the dark of night extinguishes the wrath of the Lord ﷻ." Allah says, ﷻ:

إِن تُبْدُواْ الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِن تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاء فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنكُم مِّن سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ

"If you make your *ṣadaqah* public, that is good. But if you conceal it and give it to the poor, that is better for you, and We[18] will erase some of your bad actions from you."[19] So it shows that either *ṣadaqah* expiates and atones for wrong actions unqualifiedly, or secret *ṣadaqah*.

And his saying, "And the prayer of a man in the middle of the night," meaning that it also extinguishes wrong actions just like *ṣadaqah*. That is shown by what Imam Aḥmad narrated in the version of ʿUrwah ibn an-Nazzāl that Muʿādh said, "We embarked with the Prophet ﷺ on the expedition to Tabuk," and he mentioned the rest of the

hadith in which was, “Fasting is a shield, and *ṣadaqah* and the slave’s standing in the middle of the night extinguish wrong actions.”[20]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The best prayer after the obligatory prayers is standing at night.”[21]

It has been narrated of a large group of the Companions that: people are consumed (literally: burnt) in the daytime by wrong actions, and whenever they stand up for one of the obligatory prayers they extinguish their wrong actions. That is also narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith in various ways about which there are some views.

Similarly, standing in prayer at night extinguishes wrong actions because it is the best optional prayer. There is in *at-Tirmidhī* the hadith of Bilāl that the Prophet ﷺ said, “You must stand at night, because it was the custom of the right-acting people before you, and standing at night is a means of drawing nearer to Allah ﷻ and it prevents wrong action, extinguishes wrong actions, and expels illness from the body.” He also narrated in a hadith from Abū Umāmah from the Prophet ﷺ the like of it, and he said, “It is more sound than the hadith of Bilāl.” Ibn Khuzaymah and al-Ḥākim also narrated it in their two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books also from the hadith of Abū Umāmah.[22]

Ibn Masʿūd said, “The superiority of prayer at night over prayer during the daytime is just like the superiority

of secret *ṣadaqah* over public *ṣadaqah*.” Abū Nuʿaym narrated it from him as a *marfūʿ* hadith but the *mawqūf* statement is more sound.

We have seen previously that secret *ṣadaqah* extinguishes wrong action and extinguishes the wrath of the Lord, and it is similar with prayer at night.

His saying, “and then he recited:

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفاً وَطَمَعاً وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاء بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

‘Their sides eschew their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And they give of what We have provided for them. No self knows the delight that is hidden away for it in recompense for what it used to do.’”[23] It means that the Prophet ﷺ recited these two *āyāt* when he mentioned the superiority of prayer at night to explain by that the superiority of prayer at night. It has been narrated from Anas that this *āyah* was revealed about waiting for the prayer of *ʿIshā’*, and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it and declared it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.[24]

It is narrated of him that he said concerning this *āyah*, “They used to perform optional prayers between *Maghrib* and *ʿIshā’*.” Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[25] The like of it is narrated of Bilāl, and it is narrated by al-Bazzār with a weak chain of transmission.

All of this is comprised in the general meaning of the *āyāt*'s words, because Allah praises those whose sides eschew their beds in order to supplicate Him. That comprises everyone who gives up sleep at night for remembrance of Allah and to supplicate Him. It includes whoever prays between the two night prayers (at sunset and the last prayer at night), and whoever waits for the prayer of *ʿIshā*' and does not sleep until he has prayed it, particularly if he has a need for sleep and has struggled with himself to give up sleep in order to perform the obligation. The Prophet ﷺ said about someone who waits for the prayer of *ʿIshā*', "You are continuously in prayer as long as you are waiting for prayer."[26]

Whoever sleeps and then rises from his sleep at night for *tahajjud* night prayers is included in it, and it is absolutely the best type of optional and voluntary prayer.

Perhaps someone who gives up his sleep at the time of the dawn, and stands up to perform the morning prayer, particularly when sleep is overcoming him, is also included in this. It is for this reason that it is a part of the *Sharīʿah* for the one who calls to prayer at the time of the dawn to say in his adhan, "Prayer is better than sleep."

His saying ﷺ "And the prayer of a man in the middle of the night," mentions the best times for prayer at night, which is the middle of the night. At-Tirmidhī and an-Nasā'ī narrated the hadith that Abū Umāmah said,

“Someone asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, which supplication is more likely to be heard?’ He said, ‘[The one in] the last part of the middle of the night, and [the one] right after the obligatory prayers.’”[27]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated it, and in his wording there is, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘Which is the best prayer?’ He answered, “The midmost part of the middle of the night.’ He asked, ‘Which supplication is most likely to be heard?’ He answered, ‘Right after the obligatory prayers.’”

An-Nasā’ī narrated a hadith that Abū Dharr said, “I asked the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Which [part of the] night is best?’ He said, ‘The best of the night is the middle of it.’” Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith that Abū Muslim said, “I asked Abū Dharr, ‘Which [time for] standing at night is the best?’ He replied, ‘I asked the Prophet ﷺ just as you asked me, and he said, “The last part of the middle of the night or half of the night, and few they are who do it!”’”[28]

Al-Bazzār and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated in a hadith that Ibn ʿUmar said, “The Prophet ﷺ was asked, ‘In which part of the night is it more likely for supplication to be answered?’ He answered, ‘The middle of the night,’” and al-Bazzār adds in his version, “‘...the last [i.e. the last part of the middle of the night before the dawn].’”[29]

At-Tirmidhī narrated the hadith that ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “The nearest that the Lord is

to the slave is in the last part of the middle of the night. If you are able to be of those who remember Allah at that time then do so." He regarded it as *ṣaḥīḥ*. Imam Aḥmad narrated it and there is in his wording that he said, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, which of the hours are best?' He said, 'The last part of the middle of the night,'" and in another version of his also there is that he said, "The last part of the middle of the night is the part of it in which it is most likely for supplication to be answered." In another version of his there is, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, is there an hour which is nearer to Allah than others?' He answered, 'The last part of the middle of the night.'" Ibn Mājah narrated it, and he has, "The most middle part of the middle of the night." In a version of Imam Aḥmad there is that ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah said, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, is there an hour which is better than another hour?' He replied, 'Allah certainly descends in the middle of the night and He forgives, except for whatever there is of associating others as partners [with Allah].'"[30]

Someone said that when this phrase *jawf al-layl* is used without any qualification what is meant by it is its middle. If it is said *jawf al-layl al-ākhir* – the last part of the middle of the night – what is meant by it is the middle of the second half, which is the fifth of the six portions of the night, and that is the time in which the descent of the Divine is narrated.

His saying ﷺ, "'Shall I not tell you about the head of the matter, its central pillar and the uppermost part of its hump?' I said, 'Yes, Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'The head of the matter is Islam, and its central pillar is prayer, and the uppermost part of its hump is *jihād*.'" In a version of Imam Aḥmad through Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Ibn Ghanam there is that Muʿādh said, "The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'If you wish, I will tell you the head of this matter, the subsistence of this matter and the uppermost part of the hump.' I said, 'Yes, of course,' so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'The head of this matter is that you witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner and that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger. The subsistence of this matter is the establishment of the prayer and the payment of *zakāh*. The uppermost part of its hump is *jihād* in the way of Allah. I have only been ordered to fight people until they establish the prayer and pay the *zakāh*, and they witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger. When they do that they become safe and have rendered their blood and property safe unless by a right due on them, and their reckoning is up to Allah ﷻ.' And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'By the One in Whose hand is the self of Muḥammad! a face does not become haggard and a foot dusty in any deed by which is sought the degrees of the Garden, after the obligatory prayer, as

jihād in the way of Allah, and nothing fills a slave's scales more heavily than a riding-beast on which he spends in the way of Allah or on which he is borne in the way of Allah ﷻ.'"

So the Prophet ﷺ told about three things: the head of the matter, its central pillar and the uppermost part of its hump.

As for the head of the matter, and by the matter is meant the *dīn* with which he was sent, that is Islam whose explanation we have seen in the other version on the two *shahādahs*, so whoever does not affirm them inwardly and outwardly has nothing to do with Islam.

As for the subsistence of the *dīn* by means of which it stands, just as the large tent stands because of its central pillar, it is the prayer, and in another version, "the establishment of the prayer and the payment of the *zakāh*." We have previously spoken about the pillars of Islam and their interconnection.

As for the uppermost part of its hump – and it is the highest part of it and the most exalted – it is *jihād*. This shows that it is the best action after the obligatory actions, as is the position of Imam Aḥmad and other people of knowledge.

And his saying, in the version of Imam Aḥmad, "By the One in Whose hand is the self of Muḥammad! a face does not become haggard and a foot dusty in any deed by

which is sought the degrees of the Garden, after the obligatory prayer, as *jihād* in the way of Allah ﷻ," shows that absolutely clearly.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that Abū Dharr said, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, which action is best?' He replied, '*Īmān* in Allah and *jihād* in the way of Allah.'"[31]

There is in the two of them from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best actions are *īmān* in Allah and then *jihād* in the way of Allah."[32]

There are very many hadith in this same sense.

His saying, "'Shall I not tell you of the foundation of all of that?' I replied, 'Yes, Messenger of Allah.' He took hold of his tongue and said, 'Restrain this,'" and so on to the end of the hadith, shows that restraint of the tongue, guarding it prudently and keeping it within bounds is the source of all good, and that whoever keeps control of his tongue, has taken control of his affair, made it strong and stable and acted prudently and cautiously with it. We have previously spoken about this sense in commentary on the hadith, "Whoever has *īmān* in Allah and the Last Day, then let him speak well or remain silent," and in commentary on the hadith, "Say, 'I have *īmān* in Allah' then go straight." Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad* the hadith of Abū'l-Yusr that, "A man said, 'Messenger of Allah, show me an action which will cause me to enter the Garden.' He replied, 'Restrain this,' and pointed to his tongue, but [the

man] asked him again, and so he said, ‘May your mother be bereft of you! Does anything throw people into the Fire on their nostrils except the harvest of their tongues?’” He said, “Its chain of transmission is good.”

What is meant by the harvest of the tongues is the recompense for saying things which are forbidden and their punishment, because by his words and deeds man sows good and bad deeds, and then on the Day of Rising he reaps what he has sowed. Whoever sows good, whether in words or deeds, will reap a noble generous [reward], but whoever sows evil, whether in words or deeds, will reap regret on the morrow.

The outward sense of the hadith of Muʿādh shows that the main thing that will enter people into the Fire is what they say with their tongues, since disobedience with the tongue includes association of partners with Allah, which is the most serious wrong action to Allah ﷻ and it also includes speaking about Allah without knowledge which is paired with associating partners with Allah. There is also included in it bearing false witness, which is equivalent to associating partners with Allah ﷻ. There is also comprised in it magic and slander and other major and minor wrong actions, such as lying, backbiting, and carrying around tales about people. All other acts of disobedience have also, in the main, some element of speech coupled with them which aids them.

In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, “In the main what will enter people into the Fire are the two hollows: the mouth and the private parts.” Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it.[33]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, a man will say a phrase not making clear what is in it, by which he will slip into the Fire much further than that which is between the East and the West.”[34] At-Tirmidhī narrated it and his wording is, “A man will certainly say a phrase seeing no harm in it, because of which he will fall for seventy autumns (years) in the Fire.”

Mālik narrated from Zayd ibn Aslam from his father that ʿUmar went into see Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه and he was tugging on his tongue, and so ʿUmar said to him, “Stop, may Allah forgive you!” Abū Bakr replied, “This has brought me to dangerous places.”[35]

Ibn Buraydah said, “I saw Ibn ʿAbbās taking hold of his tongue, saying, ‘Woe to you! Say something good and you will gain booty, or refrain from saying something evil and you will be safe. If not, then know that you will regret it.’” He said, “Someone asked him, ‘Ibn ʿAbbās, why do you say this?’ He answered, ‘It has reached me that the human being…’ – I think that he said – ’…there is nothing in his body at which he will be more angry and enraged on the Day of Rising than his tongue except in the case where it

said something good or he dictated something good with it.'"[36]

Ibn Masʿūd used to swear, "By Allah the One Whom there is no god but Him! There is nothing on the earth more in need of long imprisonment than the tongue."

Al-Ḥasan said, "The tongue is the amir of the body, so that whenever it perpetrates anything against the members, they reap [the results], and whenever it is chaste and abstinent, they are chaste and abstinent."

Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd said, "Whenever I see anyone whose tongue is of some concern to him, I see that [manifest] as rightness in the rest of his actions."

Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr said, "When the speech of a man is right, you will recognise that in the rest of his actions. Whenever the speech of someone becomes corrupt, you will recognise that in the rest of his actions."

Al-Mubārak ibn Faḍālah said of Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd that he said, "You will never find a single thing of right action being followed by all good except in the case of the tongue, because you will find a man fasting the entire day and then breaking his fast on what is prohibited, standing the night in prayer and bearing false witness during the day," and he mentioned some things like this, "however, when you find him only speaking the truth, you will never find his action contradicting that."

1 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 32: 16-17

2 Ibn Mājah (3873)

3 Sūrat az-Zukhruf: 72

4 Al-Bukhārī (5673) and Muslim (2816)

5 Ibn Mājah (910)

6 Sūrat al-Layl: 5-10

7 Al-Bukhārī (1362) and Muslim (2647)

8 Abū Dāwūd (1510), at-Tirmidhī (3551), Ibn Mājah (3830), Aḥmad (1:227) and others

9 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 25-26

10 Aḥmad (2:402)

11 Aḥmad (4:22), also an-Nasā'ī (4:167) and Ibn Mājah (1639)

12 Aḥmad (3:396)

13 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*

14 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 182

15 As-Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr*

16 At-Tirmidhī (614) and Aḥmad (3:399)

17 At-Tirmidhī (664) and Ibn Ḥibbān (3309)

18 The translation is based on the *riwāyah* of Imām Warsh of the recitation of Madīnah. The Ḥafṣ *riwāyah* of the recitation of Kūfa has, "He will erase..." Trans.

19 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 271

20 Aḥmad (5:237)

21 Muslim (1163)

22 At-Tirmidhī (3549), al-Ḥākim (1:308)

23 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 16-17

24 At-Tirmidhī (3196)

25 Abū Dāwūd (1321)

26 Part of a hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī (572) and Muslim (640)

27 At-Tirmidhī (3499) and an-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (108)

28 Aḥmad (5:179)

29 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*, *al-Awsaṭ*, and *aṣ-Ṣaghīr*, and al-Bazzār (3151)

30 Aḥmad (4: 112, 114, 385, 387), at-Tirmidhī (3579), and Ibn Mājah (1251, 1364)

31 Al-Bukhārī (2518), Muslim (84) and others

32 Al-Bukhārī (1519), Muslim (83)

33 Aḥmad (2:291), at-Tirmidhī (2004)

34 Al-Bukhārī (6477-8), Muslim (2988)

35 Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'* (2:988)

36 Aḥmad in *az-Zuhd* and Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:327)

الحديث الثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي ثَعْلَبَةَ الخُشَنِيِّ ﷺ ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ : ﴿ إِنَّ اللهَ فَرَضَ فَرَائِضَ ، فَلا تُضَيِّعُوْهَا ، وَ حَدَّ حُدُوْداً ، فَلا تَعْتَدُوْها ، وَحَرَّمَ أَشْيَاءَ ، فَلا تَنْتَهِكُوْهَا ، وَسَكَتَ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ رَحْمَةً لَكُمْ غَيْرَ نِسْيَانٍ ، فَلا تَبْحَثُوْا عَنْهَا ﴾ . حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ ، رَوَاهُ الدَّارَقُطْنِي وَغَيْرُه.

Obligations

Abū Thaʿlabah al-Khushanī Jurthūm ibn Nāshir ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah has made obligations obligatory so do not waste them, and He has defined limits so do not transgress them, and He has forbidden some things so do not violate them, and He was silent about some things as a mercy to you, not out of forgetfulness, so do not investigate them." A good hadith which ad-Dāraquṭnī (4:183-4) and others narrated.

This hadith is in the version of *Makḥūl* from Abū Thaʿlabah al-Khushanī, and it has two defects:

First, it is not authentically established that *Makḥūl* listened to Abū Thaʿlabah directly, which is what Abū

Mus'hir ad-Dimashqī, the Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuʿaym and others said.

Second, that there are different views as to whether it is a *marfūʿ* hadith or a *mawqūf* statement by Abū Thaʿlabah. Some of them narrated it from Makḥūl as his own statement, but ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "What is more likely to be correct is that it is a *marfūʿ* hadith." He said, "That is the more well-known position."

The Shaykh [an-Nawawī] ﷺ regarded this hadith as *ḥasan* [good], and similarly, before him, the Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr as-Samʿānī regarded it as good in his *Amālī*.

The meaning of this hadith has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith in other ways. Al-Bazzār narrated in his *Musnad* and al-Ḥākim in a hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "That which Allah declares to be *ḥalāl* in His Book is *ḥalāl*. That which He declares to be *ḥarām* is *ḥarām*. That about which He is silent is pardoned, so accept from Allah His pardon, because Allah would not forget [to reveal whether] anything [is *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām* if that is needed to be known]," and then he recited this *āyah*:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا

"Your Lord does not forget."[1] Al-Ḥākim said, "Its chain of transmission is *ṣaḥīḥ*."[2] Al-Bazzār said, "Its chain of transmission is right (*ṣāliḥ*)."

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated in another way from Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said something similar to the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah in the end of which he said, "...as a mercy from Allah, so accept it,"[3] but his chain of transmission is weak.

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated in a version of Sayf ibn Hārūn from Sulaymān at-Taymī from Abū ʿUthmān that Salmān said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about clarified butter, cheese and fur garments, and he said, 'The *ḥalāl* is that which Allah has declared *ḥalāl* in His Book, and the *ḥarām* is that which Allah has declared *ḥarām* in His Book. That which He was silent about is of that which He has pardoned.'"[4]

At-Tirmidhī said, "Sufyān narrated it," – meaning Ibn ʿUyaynah – "from Sulaymān from Abū ʿUthmān from Salmān as his own words." He said, "It is as if it were more *ṣaḥīḥ* [than the ascription to the Prophet ﷺ]." He mentioned in the book *al-ʿIlal* (Defects) from al-Bukhārī that he said about the *marfūʿ* hadith, "I don't think it is [to be] memorised [as a *marfūʿ* hadith]."

Aḥmad said, “It is unknown and rejected.” Ibn Maʿīn also rejected it. Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said, “It is a mistake. Trustworthy people narrated it from at-Taymī from Abū ʿUthmān from the Prophet ﷺ as a *mursal* hadith, and Salmān is not in it.”

I say that it is narrated from Salmān as his own words in other ways.

Ibn ʿAdī[5] narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿUmar whose chain of transmission he regarded as weak.

Ṣāliḥ al-Murri narrated it from al-Jurayrī from Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī from ʿĀ’ishah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but he was mistaken about his chain of transmission.

And it is narrated from al-Ḥasan as a *mursal* hadith.

Abū Dāwūd narrated in a hadith that Ibn ʿAbbās said, “The people of the time of ignorance (*jāhiliyyah*) used to eat things, and leave other things, holding them to be unclean, so Allah sent His Prophet ﷺ and revealed His Book, and He declared *ḥalāl* what is *ḥalāl* with Him, and he declared *ḥarām* what is *ḥarām* with Him. What He declares to be *ḥalāl* is *ḥalāl*. What He declares *ḥarām* is *ḥarām*. What He is silent about is pardoned.” Then he recited:

قُل لاَّ أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّماً . . .

"Say: 'I do not find, in what has been revealed to me, any food it is *ḥarām* to eat...'[6] and the rest of the *āyāt*." This is a *mawqūf* statement.[7]

ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr said, "Allah ﷻ permits what is *ḥalāl* and forbids what is *ḥarām*. What He permits is *ḥalāl*, and what He forbids is *ḥarām*. What He is silent about is pardoned."

In the hadith of Thaʿlabah, the judgements of Allah are divided into four categories: obligations, things which are forbidden, *ḥadd* limits, and that about which He is silent, and that gathers and unites all of the judgements of the *dīn*.

Abū Bakr ibn as-Samʿānī said, "This hadith is one of the great sources of the *dīn*." He said, "And it is told about one of them that he said, 'There is no single hadith of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ which is more comprehensive in uniting by itself all the principles and sources of knowledge and its branches and derivative rulings than the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah.'" He said, "It is told of Abū Wāthilah al-Muzanī that he said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gathered and united

the *dīn* in four phrases,' and then he mentioned the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah."

Ibn as-Samʿānī said, "Whoever acts by this hadith has obtained reward and is safe from punishment, since whoever discharges his obligations and avoids what is prohibited, and remains within the limits, and gives up researching those matters that are hidden from him has received the different categories of overflowing favour in full, and has discharged in full the rights of the *dīn* [over him], since none of the details of the *Sharīʿah* go outside the areas mentioned in this hadith."

As for the obligations, they are what Allah has made obligatory for His slaves and required them to undertake to establish them, such as the prayer, *zakāh*, fasting and Ḥajj.

The people of knowledge differ as to whether or not the words *wājib* (incumbent) and *farḍ* (obligatory) have the same meaning. Some of them say they are the same, and that every incumbent act, which has a proof in the *Sharīʿah* from the Book or Sunnah or the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) or from some other *Sharīʿah* proof, is *farḍ*. This is the best known position from the people of ash-Shāfiʿī and others, and it is also told of in one

narration from Aḥmad, since he said, “Everything that is in the prayer is obligatory.”

Some of them say that on the contrary what is obligatory (*farḍ*) is that which is established clearly by a settled and decided proof, but what is incumbent is what is established without being settled, and that is the position of the Ḥanafīs and others.

Most of the textual sources from Aḥmad distinguish between obligatory and incumbent. A group of his companions transmitted that he said, “Nothing is named obligatory except for that which is in the Book of Allah, exalted is He.” He said about the *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr*, “I am not so bold as to say that it is obligatory along with the fact that he [ﷺ] says that it is incumbent.” Some of our colleagues [Ḥanbalīs] say that what he meant is that what is obligatory is that which is established by the Book, and what is incumbent is that which is established by the Sunnah. Some say that he meant by the obligatory that which is established by well-known evidence[8] and by texts transmitted by several or numerous chains of transmission (*mutawātir*), and that what is incumbent is that which is established by striving intellectually to arrive at a correct judgement with an allowable

difference of some individuals as to its being incumbent.

This is complicated by the fact that Aḥmad said, in the narration of alMaymūnī, concerning good treatment of parents, “It is not obligatory, but I do say that it is incumbent as long as it is not disobedience [of Allah],” and there is consensus that it is incumbent, and there are very many commands about that in the Book and the Sunnah. The apparent outward meaning of this is that he is not saying that something is obligatory except for what occurs in the Book and Sunnah and is there named obligatory.

The right-acting first generations differed about whether or not commanding the right and forbidding the wrong is termed obligatory. Juwaybir said that aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, “These are two of Allah’s obligations (*farā’iḍ*) ﷻ,” and it is narrated similarly of Mālik.

ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn Zayd narrated that al-Ḥasan said, “It is not an obligation. It was an obligation for Banī Isrā’īl, but Allah showed mercy to this community because of their weakness, and made it an optional act for them.”

ʿAbdullāh ibn Shibrimah wrote some very famous verses to ʿAmr ibn ʿUbayd the first of which are:

Commanding the right, O ʿAmr, is optional,
And those who undertake it for the sake of Allah
are Anṣār (Helpers).

Aḥmad's statements on it differ as to whether or not it is termed incumbent. A group narrate that which would suggest that it is incumbent. Abū Dāwūd narrated from him concerning a man who sees a mandoline or the like, as to whether or not it is incumbent for him to change the situation that he said, "I do not know whether it is incumbent. If he changes it, that is a virtue."

Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh said, "It is incumbent for every Muslim, unless he fears for himself. Perhaps Aḥmad hesitated to use the term 'incumbent' unqualifiedly for those matters which are not incumbent for each and every individual, but rather are for the *kifāyah* (i.e. on the community such that if some discharge it they have done so on behalf of the others on whom there is no blame)."

The people of knowledge differ as to whether or not *jihād* is incumbent. So a group of them rejected regarding it as incumbent, of them ʿAṭā', ʿAmr ibn Dīnār, and Ibn Shibrimah, and it is likely that they meant it in this sense. A party said, "It is incumbent,"

among them Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and Makḥūl, and it is likely that the two of them meant that it is incumbent on the community as opposed to on each individual.

Aḥmad said, in the narration of Ḥanbal, "Expeditions [to fight *jihād*] are incumbent for all people just as Ḥajj is incumbent. Then if some of them go on expeditions it discharges the duty on behalf of them [the others], and there is no avoiding the need for people to go on expeditions."

Al-Marwadhī asked him about whether *jihād* is *farḍ* or not. He answered, "They differ about it, and it is not like Ḥajj," meaning that [the obligation to perform] Ḥajj does not drop from someone who did not perform the Ḥajj while able to do so just because someone else performs the Ḥajj, as opposed to *jihād* [meaning that *jihād* is an obligation which is a *kifāyah*].

He was asked about when assembling in a group to go forth and fight is incumbent, and he said, "As for deeming it incumbent, I do not know. However, if they fear for themselves, they must go forth."

This evidently shows hesitation out of scrupulousness, over using the term incumbent in

cases which are not reported with the words [denoting the sense] of incumbent. For that reason [i.e. scrupulousness], he hesitated over using the word *ḥarām* concerning those things on which there are different views and concerning which there are apparently contradictory proofs from the Book and the Sunnah. So, he said about temporary marriage (*mutʿah*) to women, "I do notsay that it is *ḥarām*, but that it is prohibited (*yunhā ʿanhu*)." He did not hesitate over the meaning of its prohibition but rather over using the term *ḥarām* because of the differences in the textual sources and between the Companions concerning it. This is the authentic position concerning explanation of Aḥmad's words.

He said concerning the issue of combining two sisters together in conjugal relations through their possession as slave women, "I do not say it is *ḥarām*, but that it is prohibited." The authentic position is that he hesitated to use the term *ḥarām* but not in the application of that meaning, and all of this is by way of showing scrupulousness in speech, taking precautions not to come under His saying, exalted is He:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلَالٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

"Do not say about what your lying tongues describe: 'This is *ḥalāl* and this is *ḥarām*,' inventing lies against Allah."[9]

Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym said, "Let any of you beware of saying, 'Allah permits such and such and forbids such and such, so that Allah says, 'You lie! I do not permit such and such and I do not forbid such and such.'"

Ibn Wahb said, "I heard Mālik ibn Anas saying, 'I came upon our colleagues of knowledge when any of them would say when asked, "I disapprove of this and I do not like it," not saying *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*.'"

As for that which is told that Aḥmad said, "Everything that is in the prayer is obligatory," his words were not like that, but rather his son ʿAbdullāh transmitted from him that he said, "Everything in the prayer of that which Allah confirms is obligatory." This refers to the meaning of his words, "There is nothing obligatory except for that which is in the Qur'ān and what Allah confirms of the matter of the prayer: standing, bowing and prostration." Aḥmad only said this because someone used to say, "The

prayer is obligatory," and about the bowing and prostration, "I do not say that they are obligatory, but rather Sunnah." Mālik ibn Anas was asked about someone who says that and he regarded him as a *kāfir*, so someone said to him, "He is making an interpretation," but he cursed him and said, "He has said a terrible thing." Abū Bakr an-Naysabūrī transmitted it in the book *Manāqib Mālik* (The Memorable Qualities of Mālik) in a number of ways from him.

He also narrated with his chain of transmission that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn Maymūn ibn ar-Rimāḥ said, "I went in to see Mālik ibn Anas and said, 'Abū ʿAbdullāh, what in the prayer is obligatory and what is sunnah?' or he said, 'optional?' Mālik said, "This is the speech of heretics; throw it[10] out!'"

Isḥāq ibn Manṣūr transmitted that Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh strongly rejected dividing up the parts of the prayer into sunnah and incumbent, and he said, "Everything that is in the prayer is incumbent," and indicated that there are those things which, if they are left out, the prayer must be repeated, and those for which it does not have to be repeated.

The reason for this – and Allah knows best – is that expressing it with the term 'sunnah' leads to considering the doing of that as something insignificant, abstaining from it and abandoning it, and this is contrary to the purpose of the Lawgiver in urging it and stimulating desire for it using ways which lead to doing it and obtaining it. Therefore using the word incumbent calls more strongly for one to do it and to have a desire for it.

In the language of the Lawgiver the word incumbent is used for matters to which no blame is attached if one does not do them and for which there is no punishment according to the majority, such as the *ghusl* on the Jumuʿah, and showing hospitality for a night to a guest, according to many of the people of knowledge or most of them, and all that is meant by it [incumbent in this usage] is to exaggerate the exhortation to do it and to underline it.

As for those things which are forbidden, they are those which Allah, exalted is He, protects and prohibits their being approached or committed or violated.

The matters which are decisively *ḥarām* are mentioned in the Book and the Sunnah, such as in His

saying, exalted is He:

قُلْ تَعَالَوْاْ أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلاَّ تُشْرِكُواْ بِهِ شَيْئاً وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً وَلاَ تَقْتُلُواْ أَوْلاَدَكُم مِّنْ إِمْلاَقٍ

"Say: 'Come and I will recite to you what your Lord has made *ḥarām* for you': that you do not associate anything with Him; that you are good to your parents;[11] that you do not kill your children because of poverty..."[12] up to the end of the third *āyah*, and also in His saying, exalted is He:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَأَن تُشْرِكُواْ بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَاناً وَأَن تَقُولُواْ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

"Say: 'My Lord has forbidden indecency, both open and hidden, and wrong action, and unrightful tyranny, and associating anything with Allah for which He has sent down no authority, and saying things about Allah you do not know.'"[13]

Some forbidden matters that are specific to a category are mentioned in some *āyāt*, as for example the mention of foods that are forbidden in a number of places, for example His saying, exalted is He:

قُل لاَّ أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّماً عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلاَّ أَن يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَماً مَّسْفُوحاً أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقاً أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ

"Say: 'I do not find, in what has been revealed to me, any food it is *ḥarām* to eat except for carrion,[14] flowing blood, and pork – for that is unclean – or some deviance consecrated to other than Allah,"[15] and His saying:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ

"He has only forbidden you carrion, blood and pork and what has been consecrated to other than Allah,"[16] and in another *āyah*:

وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ

"and anything consecrated to other than Allah,"[17] and His saying:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلاَّ مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَن تَسْتَقْسِمُواْ بِالأَزْلاَمِ

"*Ḥaram* for you are carrion, blood and pork, and what has been consecrated to other than Allah, and animals which have been strangled, and animals which have been killed by a blow, and animals which have fallen to their death, and animals which have been gored, and animals which wild beasts have eaten – except those you are able to slaughter properly – and animals which have been sacrificed on altars, and deciding things by means of divining arrows."[18]

There is mention of the women who are forbidden in marriage in His saying:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ . . .

"Ḥaram for you are: your mothers and your daughters..."[19]

There is mention of earnings which are forbidden in His saying:

وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

"But Allah has permitted trade and He has forbidden *ribā* (usury)."[20]

As for the Sunnah, there is mention of many things which are forbidden in it, such as in his saying ﷺ, "Allah forbids the sale of wine, *maytah*,[21] pork and idols,"[22] and his saying, "Whenever Allah prohibits something He also prohibits its price,"[23] [i.e. to sell it and then consume or use the money received] and his saying, "every intoxicant is *ḥarām*,"[24] and his saying, "Your lives [literally 'bloods'], your properties and your honours are *ḥarām* to you."

Whatever is openly declared *ḥarām* in the Book and the Sunnah is *ḥarām*.

One can also derive the sense that something is *ḥarām* from wordings which indicate prohibition along with containing threats and underlining the seriousness of the matter, such as in His words ﷻ:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! wine and gambling, stone altars and divining arrows are filth from the handiwork of Shayṭān. Avoid them completely so that hopefully you will be successful. Shayṭān wants to stir

up enmity and hatred between you by means of wine and gambling, and to debar you from remembrance of Allah and from *ṣalāh*. Will you not then give them up?"[25]

As for mention of prohibition alone [i.e. 'do not...'], then people differ as to whether or not one should derive the sense that the matter is *ḥarām*. It is narrated of Ibn ʿUmar that he repudiated derivation of the sense that it is *ḥarām* from it. Ibn al-Mubārak said, "Sallām ibn Abī Muṭīʿ told us from Ibn Abī Dukhaylah that his father said, 'I was with Ibn ʿUmar and he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade raisins and dates," meaning to mix them. So a man behind me asked me, "What did he say?" I answered, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ made raisins and dates *ḥarām*." ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar said, "You lie!" So I asked, "Did you not say that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade it, and so it is *ḥarām*?" He answered, "Do you witness to that?"' Sallām said, 'It was as if he were saying, "There are those things which the Prophet ﷺ forbade which are a matter of courtesy and discipline."'"

We have previously mentioned from some of the scrupulous people of knowledge, such as Aḥmad and Mālik, their being cautious about using the term *ḥarām*

for those things about which is there is no certainty that it has been made *ḥarām*, i.e. those things which are of the kind which are ambiguous or about which there is disagreement.

An-Nakhaʿī said, “They used to disapprove of things that they did not declare *ḥarām*.” Ibn ʿAwn said, “Makḥūl said to me, ‘What do you say about fruit which is cast among some people to draw their attention?’ I answered, ‘With us that is disapproved.’ He asked, ‘Is it *ḥarām*?’ I answered, ‘With us that is disapproved.’ He asked, ‘Is it *ḥarām*?’” Ibn ʿAwn said, “We reckoned that saying of *Makḥūl* to be too tough.”

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad said, “I heard a man asking al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, ‘Singing: is it *ḥarām*?’ But al-Qāsim was silent, and so then he repeated [the question] and al-Qāsim was silent. Then he repeated it again and he said to him, ‘That which is *ḥarām* is what the Qur’ān declares *ḥarām*. What do you think? If the truth and the false are taken to Allah, in which of them would singing be?’ The man answered, ‘In the false.’ So he said, ‘You yourself give the *fatwā*!’”

ʿAbdullāh ibn Imam Aḥmad said, “I heard my father say, ‘As for those things which the Prophet ﷺ forbade, of them there are those things which are

ḥarām such as in his saying, “It is forbidden that you should marry a woman along with her maternal or paternal aunt,”[26] and this is *ḥarām*. The prohibition of the skins of beasts of prey also means that they are *ḥarām*,’ and he mentioned things of a similar sort.”

Some of these things which are [verbally] prohibited are a matter of courtesy and instruction (adab).

As for the limits of Allah transgressing which is forbidden, then what is meant by that is the sum total of that which He has permitted to do whether that is by way of being obligatory, recommended or permitted, and the transgression is going beyond that and perpetrating those matters which are forbidden, as He says, exalted is He:

وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

“Those are Allah’s limits, and anyone who oversteps Allah’s limits has wronged himself,”[27] and what is meant here is anyone who divorces in another way from that which Allah commands or permits. He says, exalted is He:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

"These are Allah's limits so do not overstep them. Those who overstep Allah's limits are wrongdoers."[28] What is meant here is someone who retains [his wife], after having divorced her, without correctness and courtesy or releases her without good will, or takes something the woman has been given, but not in the sense of her ransoming herself as Allah permits her to do.

He says, exalted is He:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ . . . وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَاراً خَالِداً فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

"These are Allah's limits. As for those who obey Allah and His Messenger, We will admit them into Gardens... As for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and overstep His limits, We will admit them into a Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. They will have a humiliating punishment."[29] What is meant here is whoever transgresses that which Allah makes obligatory for heirs, and prefers one heir and gives him more than his due, or gives him less than it.

For this reason the Prophet ﷺ said in his *khuṭbah* during the Farewell Ḥajj, “Allah has given everyone with a due his due, so there is no bequest to be made [from the third of the estate from which bequest can be made] for an heir.”[30]

An-Nawwās ibn Samʿān narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah strikes a similitude: a straight path and on its two sides are two walls in which there are open doors and over the doors are loose curtains. Over the door of the path there is a crier saying, ‘People! Enter the path, all of you! And do not deviate.’ There is a crier calling out above the path. Wheneveranyone intends to open any of those doors, he says, ‘Woe to you! Do not open it, for if you open it you will enter it.’ The path is Islam, the two walls are the limits of Allah uthe open doors are what Allah has forbidden, that crier at the beginning of the path is the Book of Allah, and the crier above the path is the admonisher of Allah in the heart of every Muslim.” Imam Aḥmad narrated it, and this is his wording of it, and an-Nasā’ī in his *Tafsīr*, and at-Tirmidhī, who regarded it as a *ḥasan* hadith.

The Prophet ﷺ struck the simile of Islam in this hadith as a straight path, and that is the capacious

smooth path which makes the one who travels it reach his goal – and along with that it is straight without any crookedness or deviations in it, which requires that it be near and easy. On the two sides of the path, to right and left, there are two walls which are the limits of Allah. Just as walls prevent whoever is within them from transgressing them and passing beyond them, similarly Islam prevents whoever enters it from going out beyond its limits and crossing over them. Beyond that which Allah permits there is only that which He forbids. For that reason, He, glorious is He, praises those who safeguard His limits and blames those who do not recognise the limit between the *ḥalāl* and the *ḥarām*, as He says, exalted is He:

الأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْراً وَنِفَاقاً وَأَجْدَرُ أَلاَّ يَعْلَمُواْ حُدُودَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ

"The desert arabs are more obdurate in *kufr* and hypocrisy and more likely not to know the limits which Allah has sent down to His Messenger."[31] We have previously seen the hadith on the Qur'ān and that it will say to whoever acted by it, "He safeguarded my limits," but to whoever did not act by it, "He contravened my limits."

What is meant is that whoever does not transgress beyond that which is permitted to him to that which he is forbidden has safeguarded the limits of Allah. Whoever transgresses that has transgressed the limits of Allah.

Ḥudūd – limits – may be used to mean the same thing as the matters which are *ḥarām*, and at that point it is said, "Do not approach the *ḥudūd* of Allah," as Allah, exalted is He, says:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا

"These are Allah's limits, so do not go near them,"[32] by which is meant the prohibition of perpetrating those *ḥarām* things which are prohibited in the *āyah* with respect to fasting and *iʿtikāf* in mosques. In this sense, i.e. using the term *ḥudūd* for things which are *ḥarām*, there is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "The likeness of someone who undertakes [to keep within] the limits of Allah and the person who falls short with respect to them, is like the simile of people who apportioned a ship..." and so on in the famous hadith.[33] He meant by someone who

undertakes the limits of Allah the person who rejects those things which are *ḥarām* and forbids them.

In the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I take hold of your waist-wrappers [saying], 'Save yourselves from [have *taqwā* of] the Fire! Have *taqwā* of the limits!'" saying it three times. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Bazzār narrated it.[34] He meant by the limits those things which Allah has forbidden and acts of disobedience towards Him. Another example is the saying of the man who said to the Prophet ﷺ "I have violated a limit [*ḥadd*] so please have it [the *ḥadd* punishment] applied to me."

The preventative punishments which are applied in particular amounts for severely *ḥarām* actions have been termed *ḥudūd* – limits, as is said, "The *ḥadd* punishment for adultery, the *ḥadd* punishment for theft and the *ḥadd* punishment for drinking intoxicants." An example of it is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ to Usāmah, "Do you intercede in [a case which is] one of the *ḥudūd* [punishments] of Allah?"[35] meaning concerning the amputation [of a hand] for theft. This is the best known usage of the term *ḥudūd* in the technical terms of the people of *fiqh*.

As for the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "There is to be no more than ten lashes except in the case of one of the *ḥudūd* of Allah,"[36] it is something about whose meaning people differ. Some explained *ḥudūd* here as referring to these *ḥudūd* [punishments] which have particular measures, and said, "*Taʿzīr* [the discretionary punishment which is the prerogative of the amir] must not exceed ten lashes, and that must only be exceeded in the case of these *ḥudūd* [punishments] which have particular measures. Some explained the *ḥudūd* here as referring to the category of things which are made *ḥarām* by Allah, and said, "What is meant is that exceeding ten lashes is only acceptable in the case of perpetration of one of the things which Allah has made *ḥarām*. As for striking someone in a disciplinary fashion for something which is not *ḥarām*, it must not exceed ten lashes."

One of them interpreted his saying ﷺ, "He defined *ḥudūd*, so do not contravene them," as referring to these punishments which are intended to prevent those things which are *ḥarām*, and they said, "What is meant is prohibition of exceeding these *ḥudūd* [punishments] and going beyond them when enacting them on criminals." He regarded that as being the

most weighty position because if what had been meant by *ḥudūd* was taking one's stand on the commands and prohibitions, then that would have been a repetition of his saying, "[He] has made obligations obligatory so do not waste them, and He has forbidden some things so do not violate them." The matter is not as he said, because taking one's stand within the *ḥudūd* requires that one does not go beyond what He permits to that which He forbids, and that is more general than the fact that what is allowable is either fard, recommended or permitted as we have seen before, and so from that, there is no repetition in the hadith, and Allah knows best.

As for that on which He has been silent, it is those matters whose judgement, whether permissibility, obligation or prohibition, is not mentioned, so that it is pardoned, and there is nothing against somebody who does them. It is this which these aforementioned hadith, such as the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah, show.

There are different wordings of the hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah. It has been narrated with the aforementioned wording, and it has been narrated with another wording, which is, "Allah has made obligations obligatory so do not waste them, and He

has forbidden some things so do not violate them, and He has pardoned some things not out of forgetfulness, so do not investigate them." This is narrated by Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh. It is narrated in another wording, which is, "Allah has made obligations obligatory so do not waste them, and He laid down sunnahs for you so do not violate them, and He made some things *ḥarām* for you so do not overstep them, and between that He left some things, without forgetfulness, as a mercy for you, so accept them and do not investigate them." Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it. This narration makes it clear that that which is pardoned is that whose mention is omitted, and so it has not been made *ḥarām* nor has it been made *ḥalāl*.

However something that ought to be known is that the mention of something in terms of making it *ḥarām* or *ḥalāl* is of those things whose understanding may be concealed of texts from the Book and the Sunnah, because the implication of these texts' may be by means of the letter of the text and clear declaration, and they may be by means of general and inclusive statements [from which particulars can be understood], or they may be by means of eliciting

what is intended and drawing attention to it, as in His saying, exalted is He:

فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَا أُفٍّ

"Do not say 'Ugh!' to them,"[37] because this comprises those harmful and injurious matters which are more serious than saying 'Ugh!' by following the logic of what is more fittingly and appropriately [considered an expression of disrespect]. That is called understanding derived from agreement (*mafhūm al-muwāfaqah*).

Its proof may come by way of understanding the contrary (*mafhūm al-mukhālafah*), such as in his saying, "On pasturing animals there is *zakāh* [due],"[38] because it shows by what is understood from it that there is no *zakāh* on non-pasturing [animals], which most have taken to be the case and which they reckon as understanding an implied contrary, and which they regard as a proof.

Its proof may arise from the category of analogical reasoning, because when the Lawgiver stipulates a judgement about something because of any meaning [in it], and if that meaning is also existent in some

other case, then the judgement is transferred to every case that fits that meaning according to the majority of the people of knowledge, and that is of the category of justice and the balance (*mīzān*) which Allah revealed and with which He commands to be reckoned. This is everything by which the implication of the texts concerning that which is *ḥalāl* and that which is *ḥarām* can be known.

As for that which is devoid of all that, then here it is sought to be shown that it is pardoned by His not mentioning it either as obligatory or as *ḥarām*. In this there are two approaches:

First, that it is said that, "There is to be no declaring something incumbent or *ḥarām* except by the revelation, and that revelation did not declare such and such obligatory and did not declare it *ḥarām*, therefore it is not obligatory and it is not *ḥarām*," as it is said in similar cases concerning attempting to prove that the *witr* and sacrifice of the ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā are not incumbent, or the refutation of the *ḥarām* nature of [a species of] lizard[39] and the like, or the refutation of considering *ḥarām* some contracts about which there is disagreement such as *musāqah*[40] and *muzāraʿah*[41] and the like. All of this refers back to [the principle of]

assuming freedom of duty [as the norm] where nothing is found that shows it [duty] as being employed.[42] This type of attempting to derive a proof[43] is only correct for someone who knows the different types of proof used in the revelation and has endeavoured to learn their extents. If, along with that [knowledge], it is known categorically that there does not exist something which shows that a matter is incumbent or *ḥarām*, it is also affirmed that it [the matter in question] is not incumbent or *ḥarām*, just as it is categorically affirmed that there is no obligation of a sixth prayer, or fasting another month other than the month of Ramaḍān, or obligation of *zakāh* on property other than that property from which *zakāh* is taken, or a Ḥajj other than the [single obligatory] Ḥajj of Islam, although all of this is demonstrated by texts which clearly state it. If it is assumed [rather than categorically known] that there is nothing which shows that something is incumbent or *ḥarām*, then it would be assumed that it is not incumbent or *ḥarām* but without being categoric about it.

The second approach, is to mention of the general proofs of the revelation that which demonstrates that whatever the revelation does not make obligatory nor

ḥarām is pardoned, such as this hadith of Abū Thaʿlabah and the other aforementioned hadith in the same sense, and such as his saying ﷺ when he was asked as to whether the Ḥajj is every year and he answered, “Leave me as long as I leave you, for all that destroyed those who were before you was their excessive questioning and their disagreement with their prophets. If I forbid you something, then leave it alone. If I tell you to do something, do of it what you are able.”[44]

There is also as an example his saying ﷺ in the hadith of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, “The greatest criminal of the Muslims against the Muslims is someone who asks about something which has not been forbidden and which is then forbidden because of his asking.”[45]

The Qur’ān demonstrates the like of this also in a number of places, such as in His saying ﷻ: “Say: ‘I do not find, in what has been revealed to me, any food it is *ḥarām* to eat except for carrion...’”[46] because this demonstrates that that whose prohibition does not exist is not *ḥarām*. It is similar with His saying:

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ

"What is the matter with you that you do not eat that over which the name of Allah has been mentioned, when He has made clear to you what He has made *ḥarām* for you except when you are forced to eat it?"[47] because He rebuked them for abandoning eating that over which the name of Allah is mentioned citing as a cause that He has made clear to them what is *ḥarām* and that this is not of it. So He demonstrated that things are, of their nature, permissible, for if not then He would not have blamed someone who refused to eat of that which He has not stated textually that it is *ḥalāl*, by the simple fact that He has not stated that it is *ḥarām*.

Know that this issue is not the issue regarding the judgement on individual matters before the arrival of the revelation as to whether it is forbidden or permissible or there is no ruling on it, because that issue was hypothesised about the time before the arrival of the revelation. However, after its arrival these texts and the like of them demonstrate that the judgement of that principle has passed and it is affirmed that the principle with respect to things is permissibility, with proofs from the revelation.[48] Some of them say that there is consensus about that, and

they regard those who ascribe equality to the two cases and regard their judgement as one to be incorrect.

The words of Imam Aḥmad show that whatever is not comprised under the texts which declare matters *ḥarām* is something pardonable. Abū'l-Ḥārith said, "I asked Abū ʿAbdullāh – meaning Aḥmad: 'The people who own birds slaughter some birds which we do not know about. What is your view about eating them?' He answered, 'There is no harm in eating anything which does not have claws or does not eat carrion[49].'" So he regarded the birds which are *ḥarām* to be only those possessing claws and talons, about which there are texts, and those which eat carrion because these [latter] are in the same category as the crow about which there is a textual statement, and so the judgement of permissibility applies to everything other than these two. The hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās which we mentioned previously demonstrates the like of this, and also the hadith of Salmān al-Fārisī in which is prohibition of asking about cheese, clarified butter, and fur garments, because cheese used to be manufactured in the land of the Zoroastrians and of similar types of *kāfirūn*, and similarly clarified butter,

and also fur garments were imported from them, and their slaughtered animals are *maytah*[50]. This is one of the things which demonstrates the permissibility of the milk of animals which have not been slaughtered according to the *Sharīʿah* and their rennet, and the permissibility of the foods of the Zoroastrians. However, respecting all of this there is a famous difference of opinion. It is interpreted that when the matter is ambiguous it is not necessary to ask and enquire about it, as Ibn ʿUmar said, when he was asked about the cheese which the Zoroastrians made, and he answered, "That which I find in the Muslims' marketplaces I buy and I do not ask about it."[51] Cheese was mentioned in ʿUmar's presence and someone said to him, "It is manufactured with rennet from animals that have not been slaughtered by *ḥalāl* methods," and he said, "Mention the name of Allah and eat."[52] Imam Aḥmad said, "The most authentic hadith respecting it is this hadith," meaning about the Zoroastrians' cheese.

A hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ was brought a piece of cheese during the campaign of Ṭā'if and he said, "Where is this manufactured?" They answered, "In Persia." He said

ﷺ "Put your knives into it and cut, and mention the name of Allah and eat." Imam Aḥmad narrated it,[53] but he was asked about it and he answered, "It is an unknown and rejected hadith." Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said the same.

Abū Dāwūd narrated the same meaning in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar except that he said that it was during the campaign of Tabūk.[54] Abū Ḥātim said, "It is also rejected."

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrated it in his book as a *mursal* hadith, and that is more likely. He has an extra piece which is that it was said to him, "Messenger of Allah, we fear that it might be [from] *maytah*." He answered, "Say the name [of Allah] over it and eat."[55]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī[56] narrated its meaning in a hadith of Maymūnah and his chain of transmission is excellent, but, however, it is extremely unusual [having a single narrator at some stage of the chain of transmission].

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from ʿĀ'ishah that some people said to the Prophet ﷺ "Some people bring us meat, and we do not know whether or not the name of Allah has been mentioned over it [at the time of slaughter]." He said, "Say the name [of Allah] over it

and eat." She said, "They had only recently left *kufr* [for Islam]."[57]

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from al-Ḥasan that ʿUmar wanted to prohibit cloaked garments of a striped Yemeni fabric because they had been dyed using urine [in the process], but Ubayy said to him, "You may not do that. The Prophet ﷺ used to wear them and we wore them during his time." Al-Khallāl narrated it from another source and he had that Ubayy said to him, "Amīr al-Mu'minīn, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ wore them, and Allah knew their position [in terms of purity]. If Allah had known them to be *ḥarām*, He would definitely have forbidden them." He answered, "You have told the truth."[58]

Imam Aḥmad was asked about wearing that which the People of the Book had dyed without washing and he said, "Why do you ask about that which you do not know? Since we came upon people [of knowledge] they have continually not rejected that." He was asked about Jews who dye using urine, and he said, "The Muslim and the *kāfir* are the same in that respect. Do not ask about this, and do not enquire into it." He said, "If you know that it definitely had to have been dyed using some urine, and it is authentically

established as far as you are concerned, then do not pray in it until you wash it."

He narrated a hadith of al-Mughīrah ibn Shuʿbah that the Prophet ﷺ gave him a gift of two leathern socks, and he wore them not knowing whether or not they were derived from animals slaughtered according to the *Sharīʿah*.[59]

There is also transmitted that by which it is sought to demonstrate the need for investigation and enquiry [into these matters]. Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of a man from Umm Muslim al-Ashjaʿiyyah [of al-Ashjaʿ] that the Prophet ﷺ came to her while she was in a round dome-like tent structure of animal skins [possibly on the back of her camel] and he said, "How excellent this is, if there is no [skin derived from] *maytah* in it." She said, "So I began to make investigations about it." The man [mentioned in the chain of transmission] is unknown.[60]

Al-Athram narrated with his chain of transmission that Zayd ibn Wahb said, "A letter came to us from ʿUmar when we were in Azerbaijan, 'You are in a land in which there is *maytah*, so do not wear fur garments until you know what of it is *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*.'"

Al-Khallāl narrated with his chain of transmission from Mujāhid that Ibn ʿUmar saw a man wearing a fur and he touched it and said, “If I knew that it was [from an animal which had been] slaughtered in a *ḥalāl* fashion, I would be happy to have a garment of it.”

Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb said to ʿĀ’ishah, “What prevents you from using a fur blanket?” She said, “I dislike wearing [something derived from] *maytah*.”

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrated wtih his chain of transmission that Ibn Masʿūd said to one of the Muslims who resided in Persia, “If you buy meat then ask. If it is from the slaughter of a Jew or a Christian then eat it.”[61] This is because the majority of the Persians are Zoroastrians and their slaughtered animals are *ḥarām*.

The disagreement in this resembles the disagreement concerning the permissibility of the food of someone of the *kuffār* whose slaughter is not permissible, and concerning the use of vessels and clothing of *mushrikūn*. The disagreement in them returns back to the principle of the contradictions of the source and the plain outward meaning. We have previously mentioned that in what we said concerning

the hadith, “The *ḥalāl* is clear and the *ḥarām* is clear and in between them are ambivalent matters.”[62]

His saying regarding the things He remained silent of, “as a mercy to you, not out of forgetfulness” means that He remained silent from mentioning them out of mercy to His slaves and gentleness, whereby He did not declare it *ḥarām* for them so as to punish them for carrying them out and He did not make them incumbent apon them so as to punish them for abandoning them. Instead He made them pardonable so that if they carry them out there is no objection against them and if they abandon them it is the same. In the hadith of Abu’d-Dardā’ there is, “then he recited:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا

‘Your Lord does not forget.’”[63] Similar to that is His saying ﷻ:

لَّا يَضِلُّ رَبِّي وَلَا يَنسَى

“My Lord does not misplace nor does He forget.”[64]

His saying, “So do not investigate them,” can mean that this prohibition particularly and exclusively applies to the epoch of the Prophet ﷺ because excessive investigation and questioning about what has not been mentioned could possibly be the cause for a revelation which could be very severe by obligating or prohibiting some matters, and the hadith of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ demonstrates this. It can also mean that the prohibition is universal, and what is narrated of Salmān al-Fārisī of his own words demonstrates this, because a great deal of investigation and questioning about a ruling which has not been mentioned among obligatory duties nor among matters which are *ḥarām* could require one to believe in its being *ḥarām* or obligatory because of its resemblance to some obligatory duties or prohibited matters. Therefore acceptance of its status as being something which is pardoned and giving up investigation and questioning is better. That could come under the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, “Those who go too far into detail (*mutanaṭṭiʿūn*) will perish,”saying it three times. Muslim narrated it in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn Masʿūd.[65] *Al-Mutanaṭṭiʿ* [the one who goes too far into detail] is someone who plunges into the depths

and continually investigates matters which do not concern him, and those who are deeply attached to the outward expression and negate meaning and analogical meanings, such as the Ẓāhiriyyah, adhere to this.

The reality of this station – and Allah knows best – is that there are two categories of investigation of that about which no specific or general text is to be found:

First, is that someone investigates whether it is comprised under the implications of authentic texts such as [its being implied under] the intended sense, the meaning or sense in which a phrase or word is to be understood, and [meanings understood by] clear and authentic analogy. This is correct, and it is something which is specifically required of the *mujtahidūn* [those qualified and authorised to arrive at judgements by the exercise of their understandings using the source materials and the principles of *fiqh*] in recognition of *Sharīʿah* rulings and judgements.

Second, is that the investigator makes a minute examination thoughtfully and reflectively on types of improbable distinctions, and so distinguishes between two things which closely resemble each other by no more than a point of difference that has no manifest

consequence in the shari'ah despite the fact that there are features that require one to consolidate them [and not differentiate between them]; or on the other hand he unites distinctly separate cases purely because of inappropriate extrinsic features and for which there is no proof demonstrating that there is any impact of them in the *Sharīʿah*. This type of thinking and investigation is not acceptable nor praiseworthy even though groups of *fuqahā'* have fallen into it. The only thing that is praiseworthy is that type of thinking which is in harmony and agreement with the thinking of the Companions and those of the preferred generations who succeeded them such as Ibn ʿAbbās and the like. Probably this is what Ibn Masʿūd meant by his saying, "Beware of going too far, and beware of going too deeply [into matters]. You must take the ancient [way]," meaning that upon which the Companions were, may Allah be pleased with them.

Some of the sayings of the Shāfiʿī imams include, "It is not appropriate for us to be contented with hypothetical cases in making distinctions as is the custom of the people of ra'y [theoretical understanding]." The secret of that is that what is necessary for judgements on the spot is assessments

and their relative dominances, so that when the union of two cases is more obvious in one's assessment than making a distinction between them, one is obliged to pass judgement on the basis of their being united even if a distinction is produced at a distance. So understand that, because it is one of the principles and supports of the *dīn*.

Some of those things into which it is prohibited to go deeply and investigate are the matters of the unseen about which we are told that *īmān* in them is commanded without the how of that being made clear, and some of which have no supporting evidence in this sensory world. Investigation of the how of that is one of those things that does not concern [us] and it is prohibited since it would necessitate bewilderment and doubt and would lead to denial.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "People will continue to question so much that someone will say, 'This Allah created the creation, but who created Allah?' Whoever experiences any of that must say, 'I have *īmān* in Allah.'" And there is in another version of his, "People will continue to ask you about knowledge so much so that they say, 'This Allah created us, but who created Allah?'" And in

another version of his there is also, “People will definitely ask you about everything, so much so that they say, ‘Allah created everything but who created Allah?’”[66] Al-Bukhārī narrated it and his wording is, “Shayṭān will come to one of you and say, ‘Who created this? Who created this?’ until he says, ‘Who created your Lord?’ When he reaches to such an extent, let him seek refuge with Allah and stop.”[67]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ says, ‘Your community will continue asking, “What is this, and what is this?” until they say, “This Allah created the creation but who created Allah?”’”[68] AlBukhārī narrated it and his wording is, “People will continue to question each other, ‘This Allah is the Creator of everything but who created Allah?’”[69]

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh said, “It is not permitted to reflect on the Creator, but slaves are permitted to reflect on what they hear [know] of created beings and they should not do more than that, because if they do they will become confused.” He said:

وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ

“Allah says, ‘There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise,’[70] but it is not permissible to ask, ‘How do bowls, tables, kneaded and baked bread, and woven garments glorify?’ because there is sound and authentically established knowledge of all of that, that they do glorify, and it is up to Allah to make their glorification however and as He wishes. People have no business plunging into that except with respect to that of which they have knowledge, nor should they talk about it and the like of it except to mention what Allah has informed us, and they should not go further than that. Have *taqwā* of Allah and do not plunge into these ambivalent matters, because plunging into them will cause you to perish away from the sunnahs of the Truth.” Ḥarb transmitted all of that from Isḥāq ﷺ.

1 Sūrah Maryam: 64

2 Al-Ḥākim (2:375)

3 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* and *al-Kabīr* (1111) and ad-Dāraquṭnī (4:298)

4 At-Tirmidhī (1726), Ibn Mājah (3367)

5 In *al-Kāmil* (7:2481)

6 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 145

7 Abū Dāwūd (4800)

8 Specifically referring to a hadith that has been narrated by more than two, but less than ten authentic narrators at every level of the chain. Ed.

9 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 116

10 It is not clear whether this was an order to expel the man: “Throw him out!”

11 By mentioning this here, its opposite is meant, i.e. not being good to your parents is *ḥarām*. Ed.

12 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 151

13 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 31

14 *Maytah* “carrion” literally “dead [meat]” is any meat that has not been slaughtered according to *Sharīʿah* or has died a natural death. Trans.

15 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 145

16 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 173

17 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 115

18 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 3

19 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 23

20 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 275

21 See note on carrion above. Trans.

22 Al-Bukhārī (2236), Muslim (1581) and others

23 Abū Dāwūd (3488)

24 Muslim (2003)

25 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 90-91

26 Al-Bukhārī (1109) and Muslim (1408)

27 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 1

28 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 229

29 Sūrat an-Nisā': 13-14

30 At-Tirmidhī (2123), an-Nasā'ī (6:247) and Ibn Mājah (2712)

31 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 97

32 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 187

33 Al-Bukhārī (2493) and others. The full translation is as follows: "The likeness of someone who undertakes [to keep within] the limits of Allah and the person who falls short with respect to them, is like the simile of people who shared a ship, so some of them took the upper part of it and others took the lower. When those of the bottom part felt thirsty they went to those above them. So they said, 'what if we tore a hole in our portion so that we don't bother those above us?' If they (those of the top part) leave them to what they intend, they will all perish and if they seize their hands (and stop them), they will all be saved." Ed.

34 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (10953), and al-Bazzār (1936)

35 Part of a hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī (3475) and Muslim (1688)

36 Al-Bukhārī (6848), Muslim (1708)

37 Sūrat al-Isrā': 23

38 Part of a hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī (1445) but with different words.

39 Called *dhabb* in Arabic. Ed

40 *Musāqah*: a cropsharing transaction between the owner of date-palms, for example, and a cultivator. Trans.

41 *Muzāraʿah*: cropsharing on a similar basis as above. Trans.

42 In simpler terms this means that one is free of obligation when obligation is not demonstrated through clear proof. Ed.

43 i.e. attempting to derive proof that something is pardoned based on the non-existence of proof that shows it as *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*. Ed.

44 Muslim (1337)

45 Al-Bukhārī (7289), Muslim (2358)

46 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 145

47 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 119

48 In other words the first principle was based on a hypothetical scenario of the past when there were not revealed proofs. After the proofs have been revealed the principle, although very similar to the one applied to the case before the arrival of the proofs, is applied based on proofs such as those mentioned earlier. So although it may seem like it has been arrived at due to an absence of evidence, that absence of evidence is in fact deliberate as the words of the hadith 'without forgetfulness' show. Thus the absence of evidence becomes the evidence. Ed.

49 i.e. animals which they have found that have died a natural death. Trans.

50 Carrion: i.e. animals not killed or slaughtered according to the *Sharīʿah*. Ed.

51 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (8785)

52 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (8786) and Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *Muṣannaf* (8:288)

53 Aḥmad (1:234)

54 Abū Dāwūd (3891)

55 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (8795)

56 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (1597)

57 Al-Bukhārī (2057)

58 Aḥmad (5:143)

59 At-Tirmidhī (1769)

60 Aḥmad (6:437)

61 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* (8578)

62 Hadith No. 6

63 Surah Maryam: 64

64 Surah Ṭā Hā: 52

65 Muslim (2670)

66 Muslim (134-5)

67 Al-Bukhārī (3276)

68 Muslim (136)

69 Al-Bukhārī (7296)

70 Sūrat al-Isrā': 44

الحديث الحادي والثلاثون

عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ السَّاعِدِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! دُلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ إِذَا عَمِلْتُهُ؛ أَحَبَّنِي اللهُ، وَأَحَبَّنِي النَّاسُ، فَقَالَ: ﴿ازْهَدْ فِي الدُّنْيَا؛ يُحِبَّكَ اللهُ، وَازْهَدْ فِيمَا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ؛ يُحِبَّكَ النَّاسُ﴾. حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ، رَوَاهُ ابْنُ مَاجَهْ وَغَيرُ بِأَسَانِيدَ حَسَنَةٍ.

Zuhd – Doing Without

Abū'l-ʿAbbās Sahl ibn Saʿd as-Sāʿidī ﷺ said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Messenger of Allah, show me an action which if I do it, Allah will love me and people will love me'. He said, 'Do without the world and Allah will love you, and do without that which people have and people will love you." A good hadith which Ibn Mājah (4102) and others narrated with good chains of transmission.

Ibn Mājah narrated this hadith in the version of Khālid ibn ʿAmr al-Qurashī from Sufyān ath-Thawrī from Abū Ḥāzim from Sahl ibn Saʿd. The Shaykh

[Imam an-Nawawi] رحمه الله mentioned that his chain of transmission is good, but there are some views about that, because Imam Aḥmad said about Khālid ibn ʿAmr al-Qurashī al-Umawī, “his hadith are rejected,” and one time he said, “he is not trustworthy; he used to narrate false hadith.” Ibn Maʿīn said, “his hadith are not anything,” and another time he said, “he was a consistent liar who told lies, and he narrated fabricated hadith from Shuʿbah.” Al-Bukhārī and Abū Zurʿah said, “His hadith are rejected.” Abū Ḥātim said, “His hadith are abandoned, [and he is] weak.” Ṣāliḥ ibn Muḥammad and Ibn ʿAdī ascribed the fabrication of hadith to him. Ibn Ḥibbān held contradictory views about his affair and he mentioned him in his book on trustworthy people *ath-Thiqāt* and he mentioned him in his book of weak narrators *aḍ-Ḍuʿafā*’, and he said, “He used to isolate himself from the trustworthy by [narrating] fabrications;[1] it is not permissible to take proof from his narration.” Al-ʿUqaylī narrated this hadith of his and said, “There is no source for this in the hadith of Sufyān ath-Thawrī.” He said, “Muḥammad ibn Kathīr aṣ-Ṣanʿānī corroborated Khālid in that, and it is probable that he took it from

him and omitted to mention him, because this Khālid is the one who is well known for [narrating] it."

Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb said, "Abū Qatādah al-Ḥarrānī and Mihrān ibn Abī ʿUmar ar-Rāzī also corroborated him in that and narrated it from ath-Thawrī." He said, "The best known of them is the hadith of Ibn Kathīr." That is what he said, and this contradicts what al-ʿUqaylī said, "The best known of them is the hadith of Khālid ibn ʿAmr," and this is more sound. Muḥammad ibn Kathīr aṣ-Ṣanʿānī is al-Maṣīṣī whom Aḥmad regarded as weak. Things have also been said [as to the weakness] of Abū Qatādah and Mihrān, but Muḥammad ibn Kathīr is better than both of them because he is regarded as trustworthy by many of those who memorise hadith.

Ibn ʿAdī was amazed at this hadith of his and he said, "I do not know what to say about it."

Ibn Abī Ḥātim mentioned that he asked his father about the hadith of Muḥammad ibn Kathīr from Sufyān ath-Thawrī and he mentioned this hadith and he said, "This hadith is false," meaning [not the text but] with this chain of transmission, meaning that there is no source for it from Muḥammad ibn Kathīr from Sufyān.

Ibn Mashīsh said, “I asked Aḥmad about the hadith of Sahl ibn Saʿd,” and he mentioned this hadith, “so Aḥmad said, ‘There is no god but Allah!’ – out of astonishment at it – ‘Who narrates this?’ I answered, ‘Khālid ibn ʿAmr.’ He said, ‘We have charged Khālid ibn ʿAmr with faults,’ and then he was silent.” What he meant was to deny whoever mentioned to him any of the hadith of this Khālid, because one should not occupy oneself with him.

Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Salām narrated it in his book *al-Mawāʿiẓ* (Exhortations) and then he said, “I used to deny this hadith, but then the shaykh narrated to me from Wakīʿ that he asked him about it, and if it had not been for this saying of his I would have abandoned it.” Ibn ʿAdī narrated this hadith in his biographical account of Khālid ibn ʿAmr and mentioned Muḥammad ibn Kathīr’s narration of it also, and he said, “This hadith is rejected from ath-Thawrī.” He said, “Zāfir,” meaning Ibn Salmān, “narrated it from Muḥammad ibn ʿUyaynah, the brother of Sufyān [ibn ʿUyaynah] from Abū Ḥāzim from Ibn ʿUmar.” Zāfir and Muḥammad ibn ʿUyaynah are both weak.

This hadith is narrated in another way as a *mursal* hadith which Abū Sulaymān ibn Zabr ad-Dimashqī narrated in the *musnad* of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham, in the narration of Muʿāwiyah ibn Ḥafṣ from Ibrāhīm ibn Adham from Manṣūr that Ribʿī ibn Ḥirāsh said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Messenger of Allah, direct me to an action for which Allah will love me and for which people will love me." So he said, 'As for the action for which Allah will love you it is doing-without (*zuhd*) the world. As for the action for which people will love you, then look at these perishing fragile goods [of this world] and fling them to them.'"

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it in the book *Dhamm ad-dunyā* (Censure of the World) in the narration of ʿAlī ibn Bakār that Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ,..." and he mentioned it [the hadith] without mentioning Manṣūr nor Ribʿī in his chain of transmission, and he said in his hadith, "Then fling to them what you possess of the fragile perishing goods [of the world]."

This hadith comprises two tremendous pieces of advice: first, doing-without the world and that is a requirement for the love of Allah ﷻ to His slave. Second, doing without what people possess and that is a requirement for achieving the love of people.

As for doing without the world, there are many indications in the Qur'ān that it is praiseworthy and that desire for the world is blameworthy. He says, exalted is He:

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

"Yet still you prefer the life of the dunyā when the *ākhirah* is better and longer lasting."[2] And He says, exalted is He:

تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ

"You desire the goods of the dunyā, whereas Allah desires the *ākhirah*."[3] And He says, exalted is He, in the story of Qārūn:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً وَلَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ ... تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوّاً فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَاداً وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

"He went out among his people in his finery. Those who desired the life of the *dunyā* said, 'Oh! If only we had the same as Qārūn has been given! What immense good fortune he possesses.' But those who had been given knowledge said, 'Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for those who have *īmān* and act rightly. But only the steadfast will obtain it...'" up to His saying, "That abode of the *ākhirah* – We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the earth or to cause corruption in it. The successful outcome is for those who have *taqwā*."[4] And He says, exalted is He:

وَفَرِحُواْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الآخِرَةِ إِلاَّ مَتَاعٌ

"They rejoice in the life of the *dunyā*. Yet the life of the *dunyā*, compared to the *ākhirah*, is only fleeting enjoyment."[5] And He says:

قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا

"Say, 'The enjoyment of the *dunyā* is very brief. The *ākhirah* is better for those who have *taqwā*. You will not be wronged by so much as the smallest speck.'"[6]

He says, quoting the *mu'min* from the family of Firʿawn as saying to his people:

وَقَالَ الَّذِي آمَنَ يَا قَوْمِ اتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ

"My people! follow me and I will guide you to the path of rectitude. My people! the life of the *dunyā* is only fleeting enjoyment. It is the *ākhirah* which is the abode of permanence."[7]

Allah blames whoever intends the dunyā by his actions, his exertions and his intentions. We have previously mentioned that when we spoke about the hadith, "Actions are by intentions."

There are numerous hadith in blame of the dunyā and [showing] that it is despicable to Allah. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ passed through the marketplace and people were on both

sides of him. Then he passed by a [mutant] dead earless kid [goat]. He examined it and took hold of its ear and asked, “Which of you would like to have this for a dirham?” They answered, “We wouldn’t like it in exchange for anything. What would we do with it?” He asked, “Do you wish that it was yours?” They answered, “By Allah! even if it were alive there is a defect in it because it is [mutant] earless, so how can we when it is dead?” So he said, “By Allah! dunyā is certainly more insignificant to Allah than this is to you.”[8]

There is also in it from al-Mustawrid al-Fihrī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “With respect to the *ākhirah* the *dunyā* is only as if one of you put his finger in the sea; let him see with what it would return.”[9]

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Sahl ibn Saʿd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If the *dunyā* were worth a gnat’s wing to Allah, He would never have given a *kāfir* a drink of it.” He declared it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.[10]

The meaning of doing-without (*zuhd*) something is to turn away from it seeking independence from it, despising it, and raising one’s aspiration beyond it. It is said, “A paltry (*zahīd*) thing,” i.e. little and despised.

The right-acting first generations and those who came after them spoke in explanation of doing-without the world, and they were varied in their expressions concerning that. There has been transmitted on that subject a *marfūʿ* hadith which *at-Tirmidhī* and Ibn Mājah narrated in a version of ʿAmr ibn Wāqid from Yūnus ibn Halbas from Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī from Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Doing without the world is not to consider what is *ḥalāl* to be *ḥarām*, nor is it to waste property and wealth. Rather doing without the world is that what is in your possession should not be more relied upon than that which is in the hand of Allah, and that when you are afflicted you are most desirous that it should continue for the sake of the reward which accrues from it."[11] At-Tirmidhī said, "Unusual,[12] we only know it from this source. ʿAmr ibn Wāqid's hadith are rejected."

I say that the sound position is that it is a *mawqūf* statement as Imam Aḥmad narrated it in the book *az-Zuhd*, "Zayd ibn Yaḥyā ad-Dimashqī told us that Khālid ibn Ṣubayḥ told us that Yūnus ibn Ḥalīs[13] said, 'Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī said, "Doing without the world is not that you should declare what is *ḥalāl* to be *ḥarām*, nor is it wasting property and wealth, but

doing without the world is only that you should have more trust in that which is in the hand of Allah than in that which is in your own hands, and when you are struck by some misfortune you have greater hope of its reward and what is stored up for you for it if it were to continue with you."

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it in a version of Muḥammad ibn Muhājir that Yūnus ibn Maysarah said, "Doing without the world is not declaring what is *ḥalāl ḥarām* nor is it wasting property, but doing without the world is that you should be more sure of that which is in the hand of Allah than you are of that which is in your own hand, and that your state in difficult circumstances should be the same as when nothing untoward happens to you, and that those who praise you and those who blame you for the sake of the truth should be the same to you."

He explained doing without the world as being three things, all of which are actions of the heart not actions of the limbs, and for this reason Abū Sulaymān used to say, "Do not bear witness that anyone has the station of doing without, because doing without is of the heart".

First, is that the slave should be more sure of what is in the hand of Allah than he is of that which is in his own hand. This arises from soundness and strength of certainty, because Allah guarantees the provisions of His slaves and is responsible for them, as He says:

وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

“There is no creature on the earth which is not dependent upon Allah for its provision.”[14] He says:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ

“Your provision is in heaven – and what you are promised.”[15] He says:

فَابْتَغُوا عِندَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ

”So seek your provision from Allah and worship Him.”[16]

Al-Ḥasan said, “It is of the weakness of your certainty that you should be more sure of what is in your own hand than of that which is in the hand of Allah ﷻ.”

It is narrated that Ibn Masʿūd said, “I am the most hopeful of provision when they say, ‘There is no flour in the house.’” Masrūq said, “I have the very best opinion when the servant says, ‘There is not even a measure of wheat or a dirham in the house.’” Imam Aḥmad said, “The most joyous of my days to me is that in which I wake up not having anything at all.”

Someone asked Abū Ḥāzim az-Zāhid, “What possessions do you have?” He answered, “I have two possessions having which I do not fear poverty: trust in Allah, and despair of that which people have.”

Someone asked him, “Are you not afraid of poverty?” He answered, “I fear poverty when my Master

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى

‘owns everything in the heavens and everything on the earth and everything in between them and everything under the ground’!? (Sūrah Ṭā Hā:5).”

A piece of paper was pushed into the hand of ʿAlī ibn al-Muwaffaq and so he read it. In it there was, “‘ʿAlī ibn al-Muwaffaq, do you fear poverty when I am your Lord?”

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, “The root of doing without is being pleased with Allah ﷻ.” He said, “Contentment is doing without, and it is wealth.”

Whoever realises the truth of certainty trusts Allah in all of his affairs, and is pleased with His managing them for him, and he severs his relationship with creatures whether in terms of hope or fear. That prevents him from seeking the world by means which are abhorrent. Whoever is like that is one who does without the world in reality, and he is one of the wealthiest of people, even if he has nothing of the world, as ʿAmmār said, “Death is enough admonition, certainty is enough wealth, and worship is enough occupation.”[17]

Ibn Masʿūd said, “Certainty is that you do not please people through incurring the wrath of Allah, and that you do not praise anyone for Allah’s provision, and that you do not blame anyone for what Allah has not given you, because the eagerness of those who are earnest does not drive provision, and the disapproval of those who disapprove does not prevent it, since Allah, blessed is He and exalted, because of His fairness, knowledge and wisdom, has put ease and joy in certainty and contentment [with

Allah], and He put worry and grief in doubt and discontentment [with Allah].”[18]

There is in a *mursal* hadith that the Prophet ﷺ used to make this supplication:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ إِيماناً يُبَاشِرُ قَلْبِي ، وَيَقِيناً صَادِقاً حَتَّى أَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لاَ يَمْنَعُنِي رِزْقاً قَسَمْتَهُ لِي ، وَرَضِّنِي مِنَ الْمَعِيشَةِ بِمَا قَسَمْتَ لِي

“O Allah, I ask you for an *īmān* which will touch my heart, and true certainty so that I know that nothing will prevent provision reaching me which You have apportioned me. And make me contented with that way of living which You have apportioned me.”[19]

ʿAṭāʾ al-Khurasānī would not stand up to leave an assembly until he had said:

اَللَّهُمَّ هَبْ لَنَا يَقِيناً مِنكَ حَتَّى تُهَوِّنَ عَلَيْنَا مَصَائِبَ الدُّنْيَا ، وَحَتَّى نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لاَ يُصِيبُنَا إِلاَّ مَا كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا ، وَلاَ يُصِيبُنَا مِنْ هَذَا الرِّزْقِ إِلاَّ مَا قَسَمْتَ لَنَا

“O Allah, give us certainty from You so much so that You render the afflictions of the world of little account to us, and so much so that we know that only that will happen to us which You have decreed for us, and that only the provision which You have decreed for us will come to us.”

We have narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, “Whoever would be pleased to be the wealthiest of people, then let him be more sure of what is in the hand of Allah than of that which is in his own hand.”[20]

Second, is that when the slave is affected by something which happens in the world such as loss of wealth or of a child, etc., that he should have more longing and desire that reward should remain with him than he is for that worldly matter which left him. This also arises from perfection of certainty.

It has been narrated of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اقْسِمْ لَنَا مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا تَحُولُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ مَعَاصِيكَ، وَمِنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا تُبَلِّغُنَا بِهِ جَنَّتَكَ، وَمِنَ الْيَقِينِ مَا تُهَوِّنُ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا مُصِيبَاتِ الدُّنْيَا

“O Allah, apportion to us enough fear of You to interpose between us and acts of disobedience to You, and enough obedience to You to make us reach Your Garden, and enough certainty for You to make the afflictions of the world seem little to us,”[21] and it is one of the signs of doing without the world and of having little desire for it, as ʿAlī said ؓ: “Whoever

does without the world will find afflictions of no account."

Third, is that the slave's being praised or blamed for the sake of the truth should be equal to him, and this is one of the marks of doing without the world – despising it, and having little desire for it – because someone for whom the world is a tremendously important matter loves praise and hates to be blamed. In all probability that will lead him to abandon a great deal of the truth for fear of blame, and to do a great deal of those things which are vain hoping for praise. Someone for whom praise and blame for the sake of the truth are the same, then that shows that people have no high standing in his heart, which is filled with love of the truth and that in which lies the pleasure of his Master, as Ibn Masʿūd said, "Certainty is that you do not please people with that which displeases Allah." Allah praises those who wage *jihād* in the way of Allah and do not fear the blame of any who blame.

There are other expressions which are narrated of the right-acting first generations in explanation of doing without the world, all of which relate back to what we have said previously, such as the saying of al-Ḥasan, "The one who does without is he who when he

sees someone else says, 'He is better than me.'" This relates back to the fact that the one who truly does without is the one who does without being praised and honoured. For this reason it is said that doing without leadership is harder and more difficult than doing without gold and silver. Whoever drives out of his heart love of worldly leadership and his own self-exaltation over people, is truly one who does without. This is the one for whom those who praise him and those who blame him for the sake of the truth are equal. It is like the saying of Wuhayb ibn al-Ward, "Doing without the world is that you do not grieve over what you have missed of it, and you do not rejoice over what of it He gives you." Ibn as-Sammāk said, "This is the one who does without who excels in his doing without."

This relates back to fact that for the [*zahid*] slave it is the same whether the world advances towards him or retreats, whether it increases or decreases, and it is like the fact that the affliction is the same to him as its absence, as we have seen previously.

Someone was asked – and I think that it was Imam Aḥmad – whether someone who has property and wealth could be [considered] one who does without,

and he answered, “If he does not rejoice at its increase or grieve because of its decrease,” or however it was that he said it.

Az-Zuhrī was asked about the one who does without and he answered, “The person who does without is he whose steadfastness is not overwhelmed by that which is *ḥarām* and who is not preoccupied away from gratitude by that which is *ḥalāl*.” This is very similar to that which precedes it, because its meaning is that if the person who does without the world were empowered to take some of that of it which is *ḥarām*, he would patiently do without it and would not take it, and if he obtained some of its *ḥalāl* things, that would not divert him from being grateful, but that rather he would undertake to be grateful to Allah for it.

Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Ḥuwārī said, “I said to Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah, ‘Who is the one who does without the world?’ He answered, ‘The one who shows gratitude when he is blessed [with some good fortune], and is steadfast when he is tried [with some misfortune].’ So I asked, ‘Abū Muḥammad, he was blessed and showed gratitude, and he was tried and was steadfast but the blessing was kept back, so how can he be one who

does without?' He answered, 'Be silent! whoever blessings did not prevent from being grateful, and trials did not prevent from being steadfast, that is the one who does without.'"

Rabīʿah said, "The main part of doing without is to gather things according to their dues and to put things in their due places."

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, "Doing without the world is to have little wishful thinking. It is not to eat rough and coarse food, nor to dress in a cloak-like woollen wrap." He said, "One of their supplications used to be:

اَللَّهُمَّ زَهِّدْنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا ، وَوَسِّعْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْهَا ، وَلاَ تَزْوِهَا عَنَّا فَتُرَغِّبُنَا فِيهَا

'O Allah, make us those who do without the world, and give us amply of it, and do not avert it from us and thus make us desire it.'" Similarly, Imam Aḥmad said, "Doing without the world is [to have] little wishful thinking," and he said another time, "It is to have little wishful thinking, and to despair of that which people own."

An aspect of that is that little wishful thinking necessarily means that one would love to meet Allah by leaving the world. A lot of wishful thinking necessarily means that one would love to continue on

in it. Someone who shortens his wishful thinking will dislike to remain in the world, and this is the maximum limit of doing without it and turning away from it. Ibn ʿUyaynah sought to prove this statement by His saying, exalted is He:

قُلْ إِن كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِندَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ... وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ

"Say, 'If the abode of the *ākhirah* with Allah is for you alone, to the exclusion of all others, then long for death if you are telling the truth...'" up to His saying, "Rather you will find them the people greediest for life."[22]

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission that aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, 'Who is the most abstinent of people?' He answered, "Whoever does not forget the grave and decay, and who gives up the best of the ornamentation of the life of the world, and prefers that which endures over that which is transient, and does not reckon the morrow among his days, and reckons himself one of the dead.'" This is a *mursal* hadith.[23]

Many of the right-acting first generations divided doing-without into categories, and some of them said that the best type of doing-without is doing without associating partners [with Allah], and[doing without] worshipping that which is worshipped apart from Allah. Then after that there is doing without everything *ḥarām* of the acts of disobedience, and then last there is doing without what is *ḥalāl*,[24] and that is the least of the categories of doing without. The first two categories of this doing without are both obligatory, and the third is not obligatory, because the greatest of the obligations are to do without association of partners with Allah and then all the acts of disobedience. Bakral-Muzanīused to supplicate for his brethren, “May Allah make us and you abstinent with the abstinence of those who are able to do something *ḥarām* when they are alone but know that Allah sees them and so they abandon it.”

Ibn al-Mubārak said, “Salām ibn Abī Muṭīʿ said, ‘Doing without has three aspects: first, making actions and words sincerely for Allah ﷻ and not intending anything of the world by them. Second, giving up what is not right and doing what is right. Third, doing

without what is *ḥalāl* and that is an optional and voluntary matter, and it is the least of it.'"

This is very close to what precedes it except that he made the first part of doing without, doing without showing off which is the opposite of making one's words and deeds purely for the sake of Allah, and it is the lesser form of associating partners with Allah. That which carries people into doing this is love of being praised in the world, and advancement in the presence of its people, which is a type of love of exaltation in it and love of leadership.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said, "There are three types of doing without: obligatory doing without, optional doing without, and safe doing without. Obligatory doing without is doing without that which is *ḥarām*. Optional doing without is doing without that which is *ḥalāl*. Safe doing without is doing without ambiguous and ambivalent matters."

People differ as to whether or not the term 'one who does without (*zāhid*)' may be applied to someone who does without that which is *ḥarām* in particular but does not do without the excess of permissible things. They take two positions:

First, that he is worthy of the use of the term because of that, and we have seen that previously from az-Zuhrī, Ibn ʿUyaynah and others.

Second, that no one is worthy of the designation ‘doing without’ unless they do without superfluous permissible things, and that is the position of a party of the gnostics (*ʿārifūn*) and others, so much so that one said, “There is no doing without today, since there is nothing that is entirely permissible,” and that was the position of Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ and others, but about that there are some views. Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd used to say, “What is the worth of the world that someone should be praised for doing without it?”

Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said, “The people of Iraq differ with us about doing without. Some of them say that doing without is giving up meeting people. Some say that it is giving up appetites. Some say that it is giving up satiation. Their words are close in meaning to each other.” He said, “I take the position that doing without is abandoning that which occupies you [and keeps you] away from Allah ﷻ.” This thing that Abū Sulaymān said is good, and it unites together all the meanings, categories and types of doing without.

Know that the censure of the world which is in the Book and the Sunnah does not refer to its time, i.e. to night and day, which follow each other until the Day of Rising, because Allah made them:

خِلْفَةً لِّمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُوراً

"succeed each other for those who want to pay heed or to give thanks."[25] It is narrated that ʿĪsā ibn Maryam ﷺ said, "This night and this day are two safe treasure houses, so consider carefully what you deposit in them." He used to say, "Use the night for that for which it is created, and the day for that for which it is created."

Mujāhid said, "There is no day that does not say, 'Son of Ādam, I have come to you today, and I will never return to you after this day, so consider carefully what you do in me.' Then when it is finished, it is scrolled up and a seal placed on it and it will not be opened until it is Allah Who will be the One Who breaks it [the seal] on the Day of Rising. There is no night that does not say the like of that." One of the right-acting first generations recited:

The world is only a path to the Garden and the Fire,
And nights are a man's shop and the days a market.

The censure does not refer to the place of the world, i.e. to the earth which Allah made a cradle and a residence for the Children of Ādam, nor does it refer to the mountains, seas, rivers, and mines which Allah placed in it, nor to the crops and trees which Allah made grow in it, nor to the animals which Allah spread in it, etc. All of that is from the bounty of Allah to His slaves with that in which there is benefits for them, and in which there are lessons and indications of the oneness of its Maker and His power and might. The censure is only for the actions of the Children of Ādam which happen in the world, because the majority of them do not come about in such ways whose end results are praised, but rather they happen in such ways that their results are harmful or at the least of no benefit, as Allah ﷻ says:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ

“Know that the life of the *dunyā* is merely a game and a diversion and ostentation and a cause of boasting among yourselves and trying to outdo one another in wealth and children.”[26]

There are two categories of the Children of Ādam in the world:

First, those who deny that the slaves will have an abode of reward and punishment after the world. These are the ones about whom Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنُّوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ
أُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“As for those who do not expect to meet Us and are content with the life of the *dunyā* and at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our Signs, their shelter will be the Fire because of what they earned.”[27] These people’s concern is to enjoy themselves with the world and to acquire its pleasures before death, as He says, exalted is He:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَهُمْ

“Those who are *kāfir* have their enjoyment, eating as cattle eat, but the Fire will be their final

residence."[28] Some of these people would tell [others] that one should do without the world because they see that trying to gain increase of it necessarily means that one will have worry and anxiety, and they say that as much as one increases one's connections with it, a person will suffer correspondingly as much on having to leave it at death, and this is the ultimate limit of their doing without the world.

The second group are those who affirm that there is an abode after death in which there will be reward and punishment, and they are those who are ascribed to the revealed ways of the messengers. They consist of three categories: those who wrong themselves, those who are ambivalent and those who outdo each other in good by Allah's permission. Those who wrong themselves are the great majority of them, and most of them remain with the flower of the life of the world and its ornamentation, and they take it in inappropriate ways, and use it in inappropriate ways, so that the world becomes their greatest concern. Because of it they become angry, and because of it they become contented. Because of it they make friends, and over it they fall into enmity. These are the people of sport and play, ornamentation, mutual

boasting and competition. None of them know the purpose of the world, nor that it is the place on their travel from which they must take provision for what follows it in the abode of [ultimate] residence. Even if one of them believes in that in a summary form of *īmān*, yet he does not recognise it in detail, and he does not taste that which the people who have gnosis of Allah have tasted in the world of that which is a sample of what is stored up for them as a treasure in the next life.

The one of them whose position is moderate takes worldly things in ways which are permissible and discharges the duties it [the world] entails, retaining for himself what is left over after the discharge of the duties, and comfortably enjoying worldly appetites within it [i.e. within the permissible enjoyments left over after discharching his duties]. There is disagreement as to whether these merit the term 'doing without the world' as we have mentioned before, but there is no punishment for them in that except for the fact that it decreases their ranks in the next life to the extent of their availing themselves of worldly things. Ibn ʿUmar said, "However much a slave gains of the world, it decreases his rank with

Allah, even if He was being generous to him." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it with a good chain of transmission. It is also narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith from ʿĀ'ishah with a chain of transmission about which there are some views.

Imam Aḥmad narrated in the book *az-Zuhd* with his chain of transmission that a man visited Muʿāwiyah and he [Muʿāwiyah] gave him a robe. The man left and passed by Abū Masʿūd al-Anṣārī and another man of the Companions, and one of them said, "Take it off your good actions," and the other said, "from your good things (*ṭayyibāt*)."

Also with his [Imām Aḥmad's] chain of transmission there is that ʿUmar said, "If it were not that my good actions would decrease, I would join you in the softness and ease of your way of life, but I have heard Allah upbraiding some people when He said:

أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا

'You dissipated the good things (*ṭayyibāt*) you had in your worldly life.'"[29]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, "If you wish be independent of the world, and if you wish seek more

of it, because you only take it out of your own purse."

Something that supports this is that Allah ﷻ has made some things *ḥarām* for His slaves from the superfluity of worldly appetites, its ornamentation and splendour, since they are not in need of it and He has saved it up as a treasure for them with Him in the next life. The indication of this occurs in His saying ﷻ:

وَلَوْلَا أَن يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِئُونَ وَزُخْرُفًا وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

"Were it not that mankind might all become one community, We would have given those who reject the All-Merciful silver roofs to their houses and silver stairways...," up to His saying, "All that is merely the trappings of the life of the *dunyā*. But the *ākhirah* with your Lord is for those who have *taqwā*."[30]

It is authentically narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever [of men] wears silk in the world will not wear it in the next life,"[31] and, "Whoever drinks wine in the world will not drink it in the next life,"[32] and he said, "Do not wear silk nor brocade, and do not drink from vessels of gold and silver nor eat off plates made

from them, because it is for them in the world and for you in the next world."[33]

Wahb said, "Allah ﷻ said to Mūsā ﷺ, 'I will drive away My friends from the happiness and abundance of the world just as the compassionate camel-herder drives his camels away from the happiness of waste material [such as general garbage and animal excrement]. That is not because they are of no account to Me, but rather so that they can take their complete portion of My generousity honouring them safely and in full, undamaged by the world.'"

This is supported by that which at-Tirmidhī narrated from Qatādah ibn an-Nuʿmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah loves a slave He protects him from the world, in the same way that any of you would continue to protect his sick people from water."[34] Al-Ḥākim narrated it and his wording is, "Allah definitely protects His slave from the world whilst He loves him, in the same way you protect your sick ones from food and drink because you fear for them."[35]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The world is the prison of the *mu'min* and the garden of the *kāfir*."[36]

As for the ones who outdo each other in good actions by the permission of Allah, they are the ones who have understood what is the purpose of the world and act according to what that requires. They know that Allah only made His slaves reside in this abode in order to test which of them are better in actions, as He says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

"It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days when His Throne was on the water, in order to test which of you has the best actions."[37] And He says:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

"He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action."[38]

One of the right-acting first generations said [in commentary of the meaning of the above *āyah* "... which of you is best in action"], "...which of them most does without the world and most desires the next life, and He made the beauty and richness of the world

as a test to see who of them would stop with it and incline to it, and to see who is not like that, as He says, exalted is He:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً

'We made everything on the earth adornment for it so that we could test them to see whose actions are the best,'[39] and then He made clear that it will cease and perish when He said:

وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيداً جُرُزاً

'We will certainly make everything on it a barren wasteland.'[40]" So when they understood that this is the purpose of life, they made their concern to be the seeking of travelling provision from it for the next life, which is the abode of permanence and residence, and they were contented with the amount of the world with which a traveller is contented on his journey, just as the Prophet ﷺ used to say, "What have I to do with the world? The similitude of me and of the world is like that of a rider who rests in the shade of a tree, and then rides on and leaves it behind."[41]

He ﷺ counselled a body of the Companions that their provision from the world should be just as the travelling provision of a rider, for example, Salmān, Abū ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Abū Dharr and ʿĀ'ishah. He advised Ibn ʿUmar to be in the world as if he were a stranger or a traveller on the way, and that he should reckon himself an inhabitant of the grave.[42]

There are two categories of people in this degree: some of them confine themselves to that of the world which will keep them alive and no more. This is the state of many of the people who do without. Some of them occasionally permit themselves the satisfaction of some of its permissible appetites in order to strengthen themselves, and make themselves energetic and ready for action, as is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Of your world, women and scent have been made beloved to me, and my eye's rest has been placed in prayer." Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated it in a hadith of Anas.[43]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that she said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to love of the things of the world: women, scent and food. He obtained women and scent, but he did not obtain food.[44]"[45]

Wahb said, “It is written in the wisdoms of the Family of Dāwūd ﷺ, ‘The intelligent person ought not to neglect four times: a time in which he takes himself to account, a time in which he holds intimate discourse with his Lord, a time in which he meets those of his brothers who tell him his defects and tell him the truth about himself, and a time in which he should give himself some of its *ḥalāl* and beautiful pleasures, because in that time he will find help for those hours and a bounty of sufficient provision and rest from fatigue for the heart,” meaning, “refreshment for it.”

When the *mu’min* intends by his fulfilling his permitted appetites to strengthen himself for obedience, then his appetites become acts of obedience for which he is rewarded, as Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, “I anticipate a reward for my sleep just as I anticipate a reward for my standing in prayer,” meaning that he intended to strengthen himself by his sleep in order to stand for prayer at the end of the night, and so he anticipates a reward for his sleep just as he anticipates a reward for his standing in prayer. One man used, when he fulfilled some of his permissible appetites, to share some of it equally with

his brethren, just as it is narrated of Ibn al-Mubārak that whenever he came to desire something he would not eat it until one of his companions came to desire it and then he would eat it with him, or when he desired something he would invite a guest of his to eat with him.

It used to be told of al-Awzāʿī that he said, “There are three people for whom there is no reckoning for that which they eat: the one eating the predawn meal [in order to fast], the fasting person when he breaks his fast, and the food of the guest.”

Al-Ḥasan said, “It is not a part of your love of the world that you seek what is right and useful for you of it, nor is it a part of your doing without it to give up some need the giving up of which would block it. Whoever loves the world and it makes him happy, then the fear of the next life will leave his heart.”

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said, “The ‘enjoyment of delusion’[46] is that which distracts you from seeking the next life. Whatever does not distract you is not the enjoyment of delusion, but rather it is the enjoyment of being conveyed to that which is better than it.”

Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh ar-Rāzī said, “How could I not love a world in which such nourishment is decreed for

me by which I gain life, by which I grasp hold of obedience, and by which I attain the next life?"

Abū Ṣafwān ar-Raʿīnī, who was one of the gnostics, was asked, "What is the world which Allah censures and which the intelligent person ought to avoid?" He answered, "Everything which you obtain in the world by which you intend the world is blameworthy. Everything in it which you obtain and by which you intend the next life is not of it [of the world]."

Al-Ḥasan said, "How excellent an abode the world is for the *mu'min*! That is because he does a little work and takes his travelling provision from it for the next life. How terrible an abode it is for the *kāfir* and the hypocrite! That is because he wastes his nights and the travelling provision he takes from it is for the Fire."

Ayfaʿ ibn ʿAbd al-Kalāʿī said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'When the people of the Garden enter the Garden and the people of the Fire the Fire, Allah will ask, "People of the Garden! how long did you remain on earth according to the number of years?" They will answer, "We remained a day or part of a day." He will say, "How excellent is that for which you traded in a day or part of a day: My mercy, My good pleasure and My Garden! Stay in it, remaining

agelessly." Then He will ask the people of the Fire, "How long did you stay in the earth according to the number of years?" They will answer, "We stayed for a day or part of a day." He will say, "How terrible is that for which you traded in a day or part of a day: My displeasure, disobedience of Me, and My Fire. Stay in it, remaining agelessly!""""[47]

Al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith of ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Wahb, "Saʿd ibn Ṭāriq informed us from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'How excellent an abode the world is for whoever takes travelling provision from it for the next life so as to please his Lord. How terrible an abode it is for whoever it prevents gaining access to his next life and for whom it makes fall short of gaining the good pleasure of his Lord. When the slave says, "May Allah make the world ugly," then the world says, "May Allah make the one who disobeys his Lord ugly."""[48] He said that his chain of transmission is authentic. Al-ʿUqaylī narrated it and said, "'ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Wahb is unknown and his hadith are not memorised," and he said, "These words are narrated of ʿAlī as his own words." The saying of ʿAlī was narrated from him by Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā with a chain of transmission about which there are views.

It is that ʿAlī heard a man cursing the world and so he said, “It is an abode of truthfulness for whoever is true to it, and an abode of well-being to whoever understands it, and an abode of wealth for whoever takes traveller’s provision from it. It is the mosque of the lovers of Allah, the place where His revelation descended, the place of His angels’ prayers, and the shop of His friends in which they gain mercy and in which they gain as profit the Garden. So who is it that blames the world when it makes it known that you must part from it, has announced its own defects, describes itself and its inhabitants, it gives its tribulations as as a sample of THE tribulation, and from its happiness created longing for THE happiness? Some people blame it when they regret, and others praise it. It told them [about itself] and so they affirmed it. It reminded them and so they remembered. So you who are deceived by the world, deceived by its delusions, when did the world prove itself worthy of blame to you? Indeed, when did it deceive you? Was it on your fathers’ beds on the moist earth? Or was it the places where your mothers were thrown down by emaciation and weariness? How many have you mourned, and nursed by your hands,

seeking a healing for him and asking for doctors for him, but you did not attain your need and your request was not accomplished. The world has already made his place of death [lit. place of being thrown down] an example for you of your place of death tomorrow, and your weeping will not avail you, and your beloved friends will not benefit you."

The Amīr al-Mu'minīn ʿAlī ﷺ explained that the world may not be blamed and censured without qualification, and that indeed it is praiseworthy with respect to those who take a provision of right actions from it, and that on it there are the mosques of the prophets, the places where the revelation descended, and that it is the abode of trade for the *mu'minūn* [where they trade in the world to receive the next world] in which they earn mercy and gain as profit the Garden. It is an excellent abode for someone who has these qualities. As for that which is mentioned, that it tricks and deceives, in reality it cries out its admonitions and warnings, and it gives sincere counsel with the lessons it gives, and it shows openly its defects when it shows its people the ways of destruction of those who perish, and how it turns [people's] states about from health to sickness, and

from youth to senility, from wealth to poverty, and from power to humiliation. However the one who loves it is rendered deaf and blind by his love of it, and he does not hear its cry, as is said:

> The world cries out about itself
> if there is anyone on the earth to hear:
> "How many who were sure of a long life I have destroyed!
> And how many who gathered, I have dispersed what they collected!"

Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh said, "If people were only able to hear the voice of wailing over the world in the unseen from the tongues of the obliterated, their hearts would throw themselves down in grief." One of the wise people said, "The world is only metaphors which the days strike for people. The knowledge of the age does not need a translator or interpreter. However, through love of the world the hearts' sense of hearing is made deaf to exhortations." How compelling [in exhortation] is the citer, if only people could perceive.

The people who do without the superfluity of the world are in different categories: some obtain it, hold on to it and by it they advance closer to Allah, as was

the case with many of the Companions and others. Abū Sulaymān said, "ʿUthmān and ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf were two treasures of Allah on His earth who spent in obedience to Him, and their transactions were for the sake of Allah in their hearts."[49]

Some of them get it out of their possession and do not retain it, and of these there are two types: some of them get rid of it voluntarily and out of their own choice. Some of them get rid of it while their own selves obstinately refuse to get rid of it, but they struggle with themselves to do that. There is a difference of opinion as to which of them is superior. Ibn as-Sammāk and al-Junayd said that the former are better because of the self's realisation of the station of liberal generosity and doing without. Ibn ʿAṭā' said, "The second is better because he has worked and struggled." In the words of Imam Aḥmad there is that which would also indicate the same.

Some of them never attain any superfluity and do without attaining it, either having the power to do so or being without it. The former is better than this. For this reason many of the right-acting first generations said, "ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was more abstinent than

Uways and the likes." Abū Sulaymān and others said the same.

Mālik ibn Dīnār used to say, "People say, 'Mālik does without,' but the one who really does without is ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz."

The people of knowledge differ as to which of them are the best: those who seek the *ḥalāl* things of the world in order to keep ties of kinship and to send it in advance [for the life hereafter] on behalf of himself, or those who abandon it entirely and do not seek it in any way. A party prefer those who abandon and avoid it, for example, al-Ḥasan and others. Another party prefer those who seek it in that manner, for example, an-Nakhaʿī and others, but something similar is also narrated of al-Ḥasan.

Those who do without the world in their hearts, have [different] perspectives and witness different scenarios. Some of them witness great tiredness in striving to obtain it [the world], and so they do without it with the intention of giving themselves some rest [from such tiredness]. Al-Ḥasan said, "Doing without the world gives rest to the heart and the body."

Some fear that their portion of the next life will decrease. Some fear a lengthy reckoning for it. One said, “Whoever asks Allah for the world is only asking Him to stand a long time for reckoning.”

Some witness the many defects of the world, and the speed with which it is overturned and obliterated, and the great crowds of the lowest type of people who seek it, as someone asked one of them, “What was it that made you do without the world?” He answered, “The paucity of its fulfilment, its extreme coarseness, and the vileness of those who share in it.”

Some of them used to consider the fact of the despicable nature of the world to Allah and thus regard it as dirty, as al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, “Even if all of the world were offered to me in a completely *ḥalāl* fashion such that I would not be taken to account for it in the next life, I would shun it as if it was dirty in the same way as a man would shun a corpse when he passed by it in case it should touch his clothing.”

Some fear that it should occupy them and keep them busy from preparing for the next life and taking provision for it. Al-Ḥasan said, “Even if one of them were to pass his entire life striving mightily, with *ḥalāl* wealth beside him, and someone said to him, ‘Will you

not take some of this?' he would say, 'No, by Allah! I will not. I fear that I will go to it and take from it and it will be the corruption of my heart and my deeds.'"

Ibn al-Munkadir sent some wealth to ʿUmar and he wept severely. Then he said, "I fear that the world will conquer my heart and that there will not remain any portion of it for the next life, and that is what has made me weep." Then he commanded that it should be given as *ṣadaqah* to the poor people of Madīnah.

The elect of these fear that they will become occupied with it and distracted from Allah, as Rabīʿah said, "I would not like to own the world from first to last in a completely *ḥalāl* fashion and that I should spend it in the way of Allah and that thus it would occupy me and distract me from Allah for the blink of an eye."

Abū Sulaymān said, "Doing without is leaving that which occupies you and distracts you from Allah." He said, "Everything which occupies you and distracts you from Allah, whether family, wealth and children, is inauspicious."

He said, "The people of doing without the world are in two degrees: some do without the world but they are not given in the world an opening to the spirit

of the next life. Some, when they do without it, are given an opening to the spirit of the next life, and then there is nothing more beloved to them than to continue [in the world] in order to obey Allah."

He said, "The one who does without is not someone who casts off the cares of the world and finds his rest from them, but the one who does without is only someone who does without the world and tires himself out for the next life."

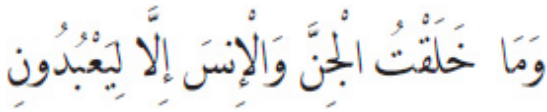
By doing without the world what is meant is to free the heart from being occupied with it in order to become free to seek Allah and His gnosis, nearness to Him and intimacy with Him, and longing for the meeting with Him. These matters are not of the world as the Prophet ﷺ used to say, "Of your world, women and scent have been made beloved to me, and the rest of my eye has been placed in prayer," and he did not regard the prayer as one of those things of the world which had been made beloved to him. So it is in the *Musnad* and in an-Nasā'ī, and I think that it occurs elsewhere as, "Three things of your world have been made beloved to me..." and he included the prayer among the things of the world. What supports that is the hadith, "The world is accursed, accursed is that

which is in it except for remembrance of Allah and what is near to it, or a person of knowledge or a learner." Ibn Mājah and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated it and he [at-Tirmidhī] regarded it as good, from a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Hurayrah. The like of it is narrated in other ways as both a *mursal* hadith and one which is connected back [without gaps in the transmission].[50]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that he said, "The world is accursed, accursed is that which is in it except for that by which the face of Allah is sought."[51] Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it as a *mawqūf* statement. He also narrated it in a version of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from ʿUbādah – I think that he attributed it [to the Prophet ﷺ] – that he said, "The world will be brought on the Day of Rising and it will be said, 'Separate out that of it which was for the sake of Allah ﷻ and throw the rest of it in the Fire."[52]

The world and everything in it is accursed, i.e. far removed from Allah, because it occupies and distracts one from Him, except for useful knowledge which shows [the way] to Allah, and to gnosis of Him and to seeking closeness to Him and His good pleasure, and remembrance of Allah and what is near to it of those things which draw one near to Allah. This is the

purpose of the world, because Allah only orders His slaves to have *taqwā* of Him and obey Him, and necessarily connected to that is continuous remembrance of Him, as Ibn Masʿūd said, "*Taqwā* of Allah with the *taqwā* due to Him is that He is remembered and not forgotten." Allah only legislated the prayer for His remembrance, and similarly the Ḥajj and *ṭawāf*. The best of the people who worship are those who most remember Allah in their acts of worship. None of this is included in the blameworthy aspects of the world, but it is the reason for which the world and its inhabitants were brought into existence, as Allah, exalted is He, says:



"I only created jinn and man to worship Me."[53]

Some groups of the people of *fiqh* and of the sufis think that these acts of worship which are found in the world are better than the bliss which is found in the Garden, they say, "...because the bliss of the Garden is the slave's portion, but the acts of worship are the Lord's due, and the Lord's due is better than the slave's portion," but this is mistaken. What supports their

error is the statement that many of the commentators make concerning His saying:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا

"Those who perform good actions will receive better than them."[54] They said, "The good action is '*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah' and there is nothing better than it." However, the speech must be understood as involving an alteration of ordinary word order, and it really means, "They will receive of them the better," i.e. they will receive the better because of them and by means of them.

The correct position is to accept unqualifiedly that which is reported textually in the Book and the Sunnah that the next life is better than the former without any qualification. There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥākim* that al-Mustawrid ibn Shaddād said, "We were with the Prophet ﷺ and they were discussing the world and the next life. Someone said, 'The world is only sufficient provision to help you reach the next life, and in it there is work, in it there is the prayer, and in it there is *zakāh*.' A party of them said, 'In the next life there is the Garden,' and they said whatever

Allah willed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘With respect to the next life the world is only as if one of you were to go to the sea and put his finger in it, and what comes out of it [when he withdraws his finger], that is the world.’”[55] This is a clear textual statement of the superiority of the next life over the world and those actions which it contains.

The meaning of that is that the perfection of the world only lies in knowledge and action, and knowledge is the purpose of actions, and it will become multiplied in the next life in such a way as to have no comparison to what it is in the world, because the origin of knowledge is knowledge of Allah, His names and attributes. In the next life the veil will be lifted and what was information will become direct eye-witnessing, and certain knowledge will become certain seeing, and gnosis of Allah will become vision of Him and witnessing Him. So where does this stand in comparison to what is in the world?

As for bodily actions, in the world they have two purposes: first, to occupy the limbs with actions of obedience and fatigue them with worship. Second, to connect hearts to Allah and illuminate them with His remembrance.

The former is removed from the people of the Garden. For this reason it is narrated that when they want to prostrate to Allah when He appears to them, it is said to them, “Raise your heads, because you are not in the abode of striving with yourselves.”

As for the second purpose, the people of the Garden obtain it in the most perfect and most complete manner, without any comparison between what their hearts obtain in the world of the finenesses and graces of closeness, intimacy and arrival and that which they witness in the next life with their own eyes. Their hearts, sight and hearing are in bliss because of the nearness of Allah and because of seeing Him, and listening to His speech, particularly at the times of the prayers in the world, such as the jumu’ahs and the *ʿĪds*. Those among them who are drawn near [to Allah] obtain that twice a day, in the morning and the evening at the time of the morning prayer (*Ṣubḥ*) and the mid-afternoon prayer (*ʿAṣr*). For this reason when the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that the people of the Garden see their Lord, he immediately afterwards urged that we safeguard the prayer of the dawn and the mid-afternoon, because the times of these two prayers are the times when the elite of the people of

the Garden see their Lord and when they visit Him. Similarly, the bliss of the *dhikr* and of the recitation of the Qur'ān will never cease for them, and they will be inspired with glorification just as they are given breaths. Ibn ʿUyaynah said, "*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah – is for the people of the Garden like cool water is for the people of the world. What relation does the sweetness of remembrance of Allah for the gnostics in the world have to their sweetness in the Garden?"

So it becomes clear from this that His saying, "Those who perform good actions will receive better than them,"[56] means its clear outward meaning, because the reward of the phrase of *tawḥīd* in the world is that the person who says it will reach to say it in the Garden in that manner for which the people of the Garden will be singled out.

In any case, what the people of the Garden obtain of the details of knowledge of Allah, His names, attributes and actions, and of His nearness, witnessing Him and of the sweetness of His remembrance is a matter the essence of which is impossible to express in the world, because its people do not grasp it as it ought to be grasped, but it is of that which no eye has

seen, no ear has heard and which has never occurred to the heart of a mortal, and we ask Allah not to forbid us the good of what He has because of the evil of what we have, by His graciousness, generous nobility and mercy, amin.

Let us return to explaining the hadith, “Do without the world and Allah will love you.” This hadith shows that Allah loves those who do without the world. One of the right-acting first generations said, “The Ḥawāriyyūn (Disciples) said to ʿĪsā ﷺ ‘Spirit of Allah! Teach us one action for which Allah ﷻ will love us.’ He answered, ‘Hate the world and Allah ﷻ will love you.’”

Allah censures those who love the world and prefer it over the next life, as He says:

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ

“No indeed! But you love this fleeting world and you disregard the *ākhirah*,”[57] and He says:

وَتُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا

"and you have an insatiable love of wealth,"[58] and He says:

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ

"Truly he is fierce in his love of wealth [*khayr*],"[59] and what is meant[60] is wealth. So when He censures those who love the world it shows the praiseworthiness of those who do not love it but on the contrary reject and abandon it.

There is the *Musnad* and in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Those who love the world harm their next lives. Those who love their next lives harm their worldly lives, so give preference to that which abides and endures over that which is obliterated and is evanescent."[61]

There is in the *Musnad* and in the *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah from Zayd ibn Thābit that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Those who are concerned about the world, Allah will disperse their affairs, and put their poverty right before their eyes, and only that of the world which has been decreed for them will come to them. Those whose intention is the next life, Allah will unite their affairs, and put their wealth in their hearts, and the

world will come to them in spite of itself."[62] At-Tirmidhī narrated it in a *marfūʿ* hadith in the same sense.

Something that Jundub ibn ʿAbdullāh the Companion said is, "Love of the world is the main part of every wrong action." It has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, and it has been narrated from al-Ḥasan as a *mursal* hadith.

Al-Ḥasan said, "Whoever loves the world and it pleases him, then the love of the next life will leave his heart."

ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdullāh said, "Within the heart, the world and the next life are like the two pans of the scales. According to the measure that one of them is heavy the other will be light."

Wahb said, "The world and the next life are like a man who has two wives: if he pleases one of them, he will displease the other."

In any case, doing without the world is the sign of the prophets of Allah, His close friends and His beloved ones. ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ said, “How far apart your way is from the way of your Prophet ﷺ. He was the one who most did without the world, and you are the people who most desire it.” Imam Aḥmad narrated it.

Ibn Masʿūd said to his own companions, “You fast, pray and go on *jihād* more than the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ but they were better than you.” They said, “How is that?” He said, “They did without the world more than you, and they desired the next life more than you.”[63]

Abū’d-Dardā’ said, “If you were to swear an oath to me about a man that he was the one of you who most does without, I would swear an oath to you that he is the best of you.” It is narrated of al-Ḥasan that he said, “They asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, who is the best of us?’ He answered, ‘The one of you who most does without the world and most desires the next life.’”[64] The words in this chapter could be very lengthy, and in that which we have indicated there is sufficient, inshā’Allāh.

The second counsel: to do without what people possess, and that it necessarily requires that people will love you. It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ advised a man saying, “Despair of what people possess and you will be wealthy.” Aṭ-Ṭabarānī[65] and others narrated it.

A hadith of Sahl ibn Saʿd has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, “The nobility of the *mu’min* is his standing at night, and his might is his seeking to be independent of people.”[66]

Al-Ḥasan said, “You will continue to be regarded as noble by people, or people will continue to honour you, as long as you do not receive from them what they own. When you do that, they will regard you as of little consequence, dislike your talk and hate you.”[67]

Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī said, “A man will not become noble until he has two qualities, abstinence from what people own, and passing over what they do.”[68]

ʿUmar used to say in his address on the minbar, “Hopeful desire is poverty, and despair [of worldly things] is wealth. When someone despairs of something he becomes independent of it.”

It is narrated that ʿAbdullāh ibn Salām met Kaʿb al-Aḥbār when he was with ʿUmar and asked, “Kaʿb, who are the lords of knowledge?” He answered, “Those who act according to it.” He asked, “What takes knowledge away from the hearts of the people of knowledge after they had memorised and grasped it fully?” He answered, “Hopeful desire takes it away and the greedy desire of the self, and seeking one’s necessities from people.” He said, “You tell the truth.”

There are many hadith from the Prophet ﷺ about abstaining from asking people and attempting to be independent of them. Whoever asks people for what they have, then they will dislike and hate him, because wealth is beloved to the selves of the children of Ādam. Thus, they will come to dislike someone who asks them to give him what they love for that reason.

As for those who regard the favour as being shown by the one who asks, and thinks that if he were to give him everything in his possession he would not have fulfilled [his request] by expending in response to his request and being humble to him, or those who would say to their families, “Your clothing would look better on someone other than you, and your riding beasts would look better under others than you,” then these

are extremely rare in the natures of the children of Ādam, and the abundance of that has shrivelled from a long time ago.

As for someone in the world who does without what people own and abstains from it, they love and honour him for that and he gains mastery over them, as when a Bedouin asked the people of Baṣra, “Who is the chief person in this town?” They answered, “Al-Ḥasan.” He asked, “For what reason is he your chief person?” They answered, “People need his knowledge and he is in no need of their worldly possessions.” How excellent is the saying of one of the right-acting first generations in his description of the world and its people:

> It is only a decaying corpse
> on which are dogs whose only interest is to seize it by force.
> If you avoid it you will be safe from its people
> but if you try to seize it, its dogs will contend with you.

1 Some weak narrators used to fabricate hadith to make themselves and their narrations appear unique. This is most likely

what is meant here. Ed.

2 Sūrat al-Aʿlā: 16-17

3 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 67

4 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 79-83

5 Sūrat ar-Raʿd: 27

6 Sūrat an-Nisā': 77

7 Sūrah Ghāfir: 38-39

8 Muslim (2957)

9 Muslim (2858)

10 At-Tirmidhī (2320), Ibn Mājah (4110)

11 At-Tirmidhī (2340) and Ibn Mājah (4100)

12 *Gharīb*: having a single narrator at some stage of the chain of transmission. Trans.

13 One edition has Ḥalbas. Trans.

14 Sūrah Hūd: 6

15 Sūrat adh-Dhāriyāt: 22

16 Sūrat al-ʿAnkabūt: 17

17 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *al-Yaqīn*.

18 ibid.

19 ibid.

20 Part of a long hadith narrated by Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:218) and al-Ḥākim (4:269)

21 At-Tirmidhī (3502), an-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (401)

22 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 94-96

23 Ibn Abī Shaybah also narrated it in his *Muṣannaf* (13:223)

24 i.e. giving up things that are permissible for the sake of keeping one's life simple and avoiding unnecessary luxury. However this applies only to things that are *mubāḥ* or pardoned and not specifically encouraged in the *Sharīʿah* and does not extend to acts of Sunnah such as marriage, using perfume, cleanliness, etc. Ed.

25 Sūrat al-Furqān: 62

26 Sūrat al-Ḥadīd: 20

27 Sūrah Yūnus: 7-8

28 Sūrah Muḥammad: 12

29 Sūrat al-Aḥqāf: 20

30 Sūrat az-Zukhruf: 33-35

31 Al-Bukhārī (5832) and Muslim (2073)

32 Al-Bukhārī (5575) and Muslim (2003)

33 Al-Bukhārī (4526) and Muslim (2067)

34 At-Tirmidhī (2036)

35 Al-Ḥākim (4:208-9)

36 Muslim (2956)

37 Sūrat Hūd: 7

38 Sūrat al-Mulk: 2

39 Sūrat al-Kahf: 7

40 Sūrat al-Kahf: 8

41 At-Tirmidhī (2377) and Ahmad (1:391)

42 Aḥmad (2:24)

43 Aḥmad (3:128) and an-Nasā'ī (7:61)

44 Of course, he ﷺ obtained the food that allowed him to live, but nothing beyond his most basic needs. Trans.

45 Aḥmad (6:72)

46 See Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 185

47 Narrated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim as mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr* and also Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (5:132).

48 Al-Ḥākim (4:312)

49 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (9:262)

50 At-Tirmidhī (2322), Ibn Mājah (4112)

51 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* as mentioned in *al-Majmaʿ* (10:222)

52 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Dhamm ad-dunyā* (6)

53 Sūrat adh-Dhāriyāt: 56

54 Sūrat an-Naml: 89

55 Al-Ḥākim (4:319)

56 Sūrat an-Naml: 89

57 Sūrat al-Qiyāmah: 20-21

58 Sūrat al-Fajr: 20

59 Surat al-ʿĀdiyāt: 8

60 i.e. by the Arabic word *khayr* literally "the good, best" but here "wealth". Trans.

61 Aḥmad (4:212), and Ibn Ḥibbān (709)

62 Ibn Mājah (4105), Aḥmad (5:183)

63 Ibn Abī Shaybah and Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah*

64 Al-Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-īmān* (10521)

65 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* as mentioned in *al-Majmaʿ* (10:286)

66 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:253)

67 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (2:20)

68 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:5)

الحديث الثاني والثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيْدٍ الخُدْرِيِّ ﷺ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿لا ضَرَرَ، وَلا ضِرَارَ﴾. حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ، رَوَاهُ ابْنُ ماجَهْ، وَ الدَّارَقُطْنِي وَغَيْرُهُما مُسْنَداً، ورَواهُ مالِكٌ في المَوطَّأ عَنْ عَمْرِ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَبِيْهِ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ مُرْسَلاً، فَأَسْقَطَ أَبَا سَعِيدٍ، وَلَه يَقْوَى بَعْضُها بِبَعْضٍ.

Causing Harm and Returning Harm

Abū Saʿīd Saʿd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Khudrī ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "There is [to be] no causing harm (*ḍarar*) nor returning harm (*ḍirār*)." It is a good hadith which Ibn Mājah, ad-Dāraquṭnī and others narrated with chains of transmission. Mālik narrated it in the *Muwaṭṭa'* in a *mursal* form from ʿAmr ibn Yaḥyā from his father from the Prophet ﷺ and he omitted Abū Saʿīd.[1] It has different paths [of transmission] some of which reinforce others.

Ibn Mājah did not narrate the hadith of Abū Saʿīd, but it was only ad-Dāraquṭnī, al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī who narrated it in the version of ʿUthmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUthmān ibn Rabīʿah [saying that], "Ad-Darāwardī told us from ʿAmr ibn Yaḥyā al-Māzinī from his father from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm. Whoever causes harm, Allah will cause him harm. Whoever causes distress to others, then Allah will cause him distress.'" Al-Ḥākim said, "Its chain of transmission is authentic according to the conditions of Muslim." Al-Bayhaqī said, "'Uthmān alone had it from ad-Darāwardī. Mālik narrated it in the *Muwaṭṭa'* from ʿAmr ibn Yaḥyā from his father as a *mursal* hadith".

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, "No one who narrates from Mālik disagrees about attributing this hadith as a *mursal*." He said, "It is not given a chain of transmission in any sound way." Then he narrated it in the version of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Muʿādh an-Nuṣaybī from ad-Darāwardī in a way which is uninterruptedly transmitted. Imam Aḥmad used to regard what ad-Darāwardī narrated from memory as weak and he did not have any regard for him, and there is no doubt

that one has to give Malik's statement priority over his. Khālid ibn Saʿd al-Andalusi the hafidh said, "The hadith, 'There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm,' is not sound when given an [unbroken] chain of transmission."

As for Ibn Mājah,[2] he narrated it in the version of Fuḍayl ibn Sulaymān that, "Mūsā ibn ʿUqbah told us, 'Isḥāq ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Walīd told me from ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave the judgement that there is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm.'" This is in sum the entire record which is transmitted with this chain of transmission, and it is interrupted and derived from a written copy. Ibn al-Madīnī and Abū Zurʿah and others said so. Some say that Isḥāq ibn Yaḥyā was Ibn Ṭalḥah, and that he is weak and did not listen directly to ʿUbādah. Abū Zurʿah, Ibn al-Madīnī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim said so, and also ad-Dāraquṭnī in one place. Someone said that he is Isḥāq ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿUbādah who also did not listen directly to ʿUbādah. Ad-Dāraquṭnī also said that. Ibn ʿAdī mentioned him in his book *aḍ-Ḍuʿafā*' (Weak Transmitters) and he said, "Most of his hadith are not memorised." Some said that Mūsā ibn ʿUqbah did not listen to him directly and that he only

narrated this hadith from Abū ʿAyyāsh al-Asadī, and Abū ʿAyyāsh is unknown.

Ibn Mājah[3] also narrated it in another fashion, from the version of Jābir al-Juʿfī from ʿIkrimah that Ibn ʿAbbās said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm.'" Most people regard Jābir al-Juʿfī as weak. Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it in a version of Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl from Dāwūd ibn al-Ḥuṣayn from ʿIkrimah, but a large group regard Ibrāhīm as weak, and the narrations of Dāwūd from ʿIkrimah are rejected.[4]

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it in a hadith of al-Wāqidī, "Khārijah ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Sulaymān ibn Zayd ibn Thābit told us from Abū'r-Rijāl from ʿAmrah from ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm.'"[5] But al-Wāqidī is abandoned, and there is disagreement about the weakness of his shaykh. Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it in two other weak versions also from al-Qāsim from ʿĀ'ishah.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī also narrated it from a version of Muḥammad ibn Salamah from Ibn Isḥāq from Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥibbān from his paternal uncle Wāsiʿ ibn Ḥibbān from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ

said, “There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm in Islam.” This chain of transmission is of a middling sort but it is unusual (*gharīb*). However, Abū Dāwūd narrated it in *al-Marāsīl* [*Mursal* Hadith] in a version of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Maghrā’ from Ibn Isḥāq from Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥibbān from his paternal uncle Wāsiʿ as a *mursal* hadith, and this is more authentic.

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated in a version of Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh, and he said, “I think that it was from Ibn ʿAṭā’ from his father from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘There is [to be] no causing harm nor distress. Let none of you prevent his neighbour from fixing a piece of wood in his wall.”[6] There is some doubt about this chain of transmission, and Ibn ʿAṭā’ is Yaʿqūb who is weak.

Kathīr ibn ʿAbdullāh bin ʿAmr ibn ʿAwf al-Muzanī narrated from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm.” Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, “Its chain of transmission is not sound.”

I say that *at-Tirmidhī* regards the hadith of this Kathīr to be sound, and al-Bukhārī said about one of his hadith, “It is the most authentic hadith in this

chapter." Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mundhir al-Ḥizāmī regarded his hadith as being good and he said, "It is better than the *mursal* hadith of Ibn al-Musayyab." Similarly Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim regarded it as good, but others abandoned his hadith, of them Imam Aḥmad and others. This is what we wanted to present of the various paths of the hadith in this chapter.

The Shaykh ﷺ mentioned that some of the paths of narration strengthen others, and it is as he said, and al-Bayhaqī said concerning one of the hadith of Kathīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Muzanī, "When it is considered together with other chains of transmission in which there is also some weakness then it becomes stronger."

Ash-Shāfiʿī ﷺ said about *mursal* hadith, "When it is given a chain of transmission in another version, or it is ascribed as a *mursal* by someone who takes knowledge from someone other than the one from whom he took the former *mursal*, then it is acceptable."

Al-Jawzajānī said, "If the hadith which has a chain of narration is from someone who is not satisfactory – meaning people are not satisfied by his narrations – and other *mursal* hadith which are acceptable to the elect [people of knowledge] strengthen its elements,

then it may be used in practice and it is sufficient. This is in the case when it is not contradicted by a hadith with a chain of transmission which is stronger than it."

Imam Aḥmad sought to use this hadith as a demonstrative proof, and he said, "The Prophet ﷺ said, 'There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm.'"

Abū ʿAmr ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ said, "Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated this hadith with chains of transmission in different ways, and as a body they strengthen the hadith and make it into a good [hadith]. The overwhelming majority of the people of knowledge accepted it and regarded it as a valid argument. The saying of Abū Dāwūd, "It is one of the hadith around which *fiqh* pivots," makes it clear that it is not weak, and Allah knows best.

In the same meaning there is also a hadith of Abū Sirmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever causes others harm, Allah will cause him harm, and whoever causes others distress, Allah will cause him distress."[7] Abū Dāwūd, *at-Tirmidhī* and Ibn Mājah narrated it. At-Tirmidhī said, "Good but unusual [*gharīb*]."

At-Tirmidhī narrated with a chain of transmission in which there is weakness from Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq

that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Accursed is whoever causes harm to a *mu’min* or plots against him.”[8]

His saying, “There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm,” this is the sound narration. *Ḍirār* (returning harm) is without a *hamzah*, but it has also been narrated as *iḍrār* with a *hamzah*. That occurs in some of the versions of Ibn Mājah and ad-Dāraquṭnī, and even in some copies of the *Muwaṭṭa’*. Some affirm this version saying, “It is said that *ḍarra* – he harmed – and *aḍarra* have the same meaning,” but others reject that and say that it is not sound.

They differ as to whether or not there is any difference between the two expressions *ḍarar* and *ḍirār*. Some say that they have the same meaning and [the second is used] as a means of stressing [the former]. However, the most well known view is that there is a difference between the two, then it is said that *ḍarar* is a noun and *ḍirār* is a verb, meaning that harm itself is negated in the *Sharīʿah* and making harm enter without right similarly.

Some say that *ḍarar* is to make harm enter upon someone else in that which the person [causing the harm] himself benefits from, and that *ḍirār* is that one make harm enter upon someone else from which the

person himself does not benefit, such as someone who prevents something that will not harm him but by which the person prevented will suffer some harm. A party consider this explanation the weightiest, of them Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ.

Some say that *ḍarar* is to harm someone who has not harmed you, and that *ḍirār* is to harm someone who has harmed you, but in an impermissible manner.

In any case, the Prophet ﷺ has indeed negated causing harm and returning harm without right.

As for causing harm to someone with a right [to do so], either because of the fact that he contravened the limits of Allah and so is punished according to the measure of his crime, or because of the fact that he has wronged someone else and so the wronged person seeks redress by inflicting the equal measure on him in justice, then this is categorically not what is meant. What is meant is only to inflict harm without right, and there are two types of it:

First, that there is no purpose or aim in that other than to cause harm to that other person, and there is no doubt of the abhorrence of this and its being *ḥarām*. Causing harm to others is forbidden in the Qur'ān in

many places, for example in the case of testaments and bequests. He says, exalted is He:

مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ

"...after any bequest you make or any debts, making sure that no one's rights are prejudiced (*muḍārr*)."[9] There is in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Hurayrah that, "The slave will act in obedience to Allah for sixty years, and then death will attend him and he will harm someone in his bequest and enter the Fire."

Then he recited:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ... وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَاراً خَالِداً فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

"These are Allah's limits...," up to His saying, "...As for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and overstep His limits, We will admit them into a Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever."[10] At-Tirmidhī and others narrated it with the same meaning.[11]

Ibn ʿAbbās said, "Causing harm to others in one's bequest is one of the major wrong actions," and then he recited this *āyah*.

Causing some harm to others in one's bequest sometimes consists of selecting one of the inheritors [who obligatorily inherit part of the fixed portions] for some extra inheritance over the obligatory portion which Allah stipulated for him, so that the other inheritors are harmed by his being shown special treatment. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has given everyone with a right his due, so there is no bequest to be made for [someone who is already] an inheritor."

Sometimes it can be that someone makes a bequest which is larger than the third [of his estate which he may legally make as a bequest] for a stranger[12] [who has no fixed inheritance] so that he deprives the lawful inheritors of their dues. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ said, "A third [may be given in bequest], and a third is a great deal."[13]

Whenever someone makes a bequest for an inheritor, or for a non-inheritor with an amount greater than a third, then what he has bequeathed may only be executed with the agreement of the other inheritors, whether or not he intended to cause some harm. As for in the case when he intended to cause harm by means of his bequest to a non-inheritor of

more than a third of his estate, then he is guilty of wrong action by his intending such harm, but as to whether or not his bequest is rejected if it is clearly established that he has done so and he confirms it, Ibn ʿAṭiyyah narrates of Mālik that it must be rejected. Some say that it is an analogical deduction of the school of Aḥmad.

Another example is that of the husband's right to return [his wife to him within the term of the divorce] in marriage. He says, exalted is He:

فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلاَ تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَاراً لِّتَعْتَدُواْ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

"then either retain them with correctness and courtesy or release them with correctness and courtesy. Do not retain them by force, thus overstepping the limits. Anyone who does that has wronged himself,"[14] and He says:

وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُواْ إِصْلاَحاً

"Their husbands have the right to take them back within that time, if they desire to be reconciled."[15] That shows that if someone intends his wife some

harm by his returning her, he is guilty of wrong action. This was as they were in the beginning of Islam, before the restriction of divorce to three times, when a man would divorce his wife and leave her alone until her *ʿiddah* term was almost finished and then make her return, then divorce her again, doing that endlessly, thus leaving the woman neither divorced nor retained in marriage, and so Allah declared that void, and He restricted divorce to three times [the third time being irrevocable].

Mālik took the position that someone who took his wife back before the expiration of her *ʿiddah* term and then divorced her without having touched her [in intercourse], that if he had intended to harm her by prolonging her *ʿiddah*, then the *ʿiddah* would not recommence from the beginning but she would continue on from however much of it [the *ʿiddah*] had already taken place. If he had not intended that [harm], then her *ʿiddah* would recommence from the beginning anew. Some say that she would continue on from whatever of the *ʿiddah* had already taken place without any qualification [as to whether he intended harm or not], and that is the position of ʿAṭā', Qatādah, ash-Shāfiʿī in the older position of his, and

Aḥmad in one narration from him. Others [on the other hand] say that in every case she begins the *ʿiddah* anew from the beginning and that is the position of the majority, among them Abū Qilābah, az-Zuhrī, ath-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfiʿī in his later position, Aḥmad in a narration from him, Isḥāq, Abū ʿUbayd and others.

Another example is the husband's vowing not to have intercourse with his wife (*īlā*), because Allah made the term for it four months. If the man vows to refuse to have intercourse with his wife, then he is given four months, then if he returns to intercourse that is his *tawba*, but if he continues in his refusal he is not empowered to do that. Concerning it there are two statements from the right-acting first generations and the later generations: first, that she is automatically divorced with the expiry of this term; second, that he is made to reflect and if he returns [to intercourse, then well and good] but if he does not, he is ordered to divorce her. If he gives up intercourse intending to do some harm without having sworn an oath to do so for the term of four months, then most of our colleagues say that the judgement on him is the same as the judgement on the person who pronounces the

oath of *īlā*, and they say that it is the clear outward meaning of the words of Aḥmad.

In this way a significant body of them say that if he abandons intercourse for four months without excuse and then she seeks divorce, they are separated based on the premise that intercourse within this term according to us is obligatory. They disagree as to whether or not the intention to cause some harm is taken into account. The position of Mālik and his companions is that if he gives up intercourse without excuse, that his marriage is invalidated, along with a disagreement among them as to the length of the term.

If he prolongs travelling without excuse and his wife seeks his return and he refuses, then Mālik, Aḥmad and Isḥāq said that the ruler separates them. Aḥmad regarded the term for that six months, but Isḥāq said that it was with the passage of two years.

Another example is in the case of suckling. He says, exalted is He:

لَا تُضَآرَّ وَالِدَةٌۢ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ

“No mother should be put under pressure in respect of her child nor any father in respect of his

child."[16] Mujāhid spoke about His saying, "No mother should be put under pressure in respect of her child," and he said, "Let him not prevent the child's mother from breast-feeding in order to cause her grief." ʿAṭā', Qatādah, az-Zuhrī, Sufyān, as-Suddī and others said, "If she is contented with what others are contented with, then she has more right to it." This is what is stated clearly by Aḥmad, even if the mother of the child is in a bond [of marriage] with the husband. Some say that if she is in a bond [of marriage] with the husband, then he has the right to prevent her from breast-feeding the child unless it is not possible for her to find another to breast-feed it, and that is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and some of our colleagues. However, that is only permitted if the husband's intention is to fully retain wife [i.e. her beauty and physical shape] to seek joy from that, and not purely to cause her trouble.

His saying, "...nor any father in respect of his child,"[17] includes in it that if the divorced woman seeks to suckle her child in return for the same wage as someone else of an equivalent standing, the father is required to respond to that, whether or not someone else is found. This is the stated position of Imam

Aḥmad. If she seeks more than the wage of someone of an equivalent standing and the father then finds someone who will breast-feed the child for the wage of someone equivalent, then the father is not required to respond to her request, because she intends to give him some trouble [by charging too much]. Imam Aḥmad stated this as his position.

Another example is in buying and selling. It has been narrated that the sale of someone who has been coerced is not permissible. Abū Dāwūd narrated it from a hadith of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib that he addressed people and said, "There will come to people a distressing time in which the affluent person will hold fast what he owns, and he is not commanded to do that. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟ ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ

'Do not forget to show generosity to one another.'[18] They will purchase from people who are under pressure, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade a sale which takes place under pressure.[19]"[20] Al-Ismāʿīlī narrated it and added, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'If you have something valuable, confer it on

your brother, and if not, then do not increase his condition if he is in dire straits.'" Abū Yaʿlā al-Mawṣilī also narrated it in the same sense from a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ḥudhayfah.

ʿAbdullāh ibn Maʿqil said, "A sale undertaken because of pressing need is usury."

Ḥarb said, "Aḥmad was asked about a sale undertaken under pressure, and he disapproved of it. Someone asked him, 'How is it?' He answered, 'Someone comes to you when he is in great need and you sell him something worth ten for twenty.'" Abū Ṭālib said, "Someone said to Aḥmad, 'What if he profits by five on the ten?' and he disapproved of that, and if the purchaser is resigned and uncaring and not being very good at bargaining so that he sells at a serious loss,[21] then that is also not valid. Aḥmad said, "Using attractive [sales] talk (*khilābah*) is attempting to deceive, which is that he causes him such a loss by taking an exorbitant profit in the sale of something in which people do not ordinarily make such profits, so he sells him something for five dirhams whose value is a dirham." The school of Mālik and Aḥmad is that the choice of cancelling it is established for him because of that.

If he is in need of cash and can find no one to lend him, and so he contracts to buy something to be paid for after a period, his intention being to sell those goods and obtain their price, then on this there are two positions among the right-acting first generations. Aḥmad, in one version, gave licence for it, and in another version he said, "I am afraid that he might be under pressure [and thus come under the prohibition of the hadith]." If he sells it back to the one who sold it to him, then most of the right-acting first generations regard that as *ḥarām*,[22] and it is the school of Mālik, Abū Ḥanīfah, Aḥmad and others.

Another type of harm that can be involved in sales is to separate a [slave] mother from her child in sale. If he is young it is unanimously considered *ḥarām*. It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever separates a mother and her child, then Allah will separate him from his loved ones on the Day of Rising."[23] If the mother is contented with that, then there is disagreement as to whether it is permissible. There are very many cases involving some kinds of harm with rulings on them, and we have only mentioned this as a representative example.

The second type, is that someone has some other sound objective, for example that he should transact with his own property in a way which is of some use to him, but that leads to some harm for someone else, or prevents someone else from benefiting in full from his property and so the person thus prevented is harmed.

As for the former, i.e. someone whose transactions in his own property lead to causing damage to someone else, then if it is through non-customary means, for example if someone sets a blaze burning fiercely on his land on a windy day and it burns neighbouring [land or property], then he is required to stand surety [for the damage caused]. If it is through customary means, then the people of knowledge have two well-known statements:

First, that he will not be prevented from that, and that is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī, Abū Ḥanīfah and others.

Second, that he is prevented, which is the position of Aḥmad, and Mālik agreed with him in some forms of it. One of the forms of that is that someone opens an aperture in the upper part of his building overlooking his neighbour, or he builds a tall building

overlooking his neighbour without any screen, in which case he is obliged to screen it. Aḥmad clearly states that, and a party of ash-Shāfiʿī's companions agreed with him. One of them, ar-Rūyānī, said in the book *al-Ḥilyah*, "The judge must exercise his judgement about that, and prevent it if it is clear to him that there has been some infliction of distress and the intention was to cause corruption." He said, "There is a similar position about building tall buildings and blocking [the light of] the sun and the moon."

Al-Kharā'iṭī and Ibn ʿAdī narrated with a weak chain of transmission from ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather a long *marfūʿ* hadith with respect to the rights of neighbours, in which is, "Do not build tall buildings overlooking him which keep away the wind, unless he gives his permission."

An example of it, is building a well close to a neighbour's well so as to deprive him of his water, because it must be filled in according to the clear position of Mālik and Aḥmad. Abū Dāwūd narrated in his *al-Marāsīl* (Mursal Hadith) the hadith that Abū Qilābah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Do not cause harm in digging a well, and that is that a man

dig a well close to another man in order to take away his water."[24]

Another example is to bring something about within one's own property that will cause harm in one's neighbour's property, for example shaking violently or pounding and knocking and the like, because these are forbidden in the clear position of Mālik and Aḥmad, and it is one of the positions of ash-Shāfiʿī.

Similarly, if it causes harm and distress to residents, such as that which has a foul smell and the like.

Another example is that someone has some possessions on another person's land, and the owner of the land is caused harm and distress by his entrance on to his land, then in that case he is compelled to remove it to expel the harm that his coming on to the land causes. Abū Dāwūd narrated in his *Sunan* a hadith of Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī that he narrated from Samurah ibn Jundub that he had a row of date palms in an Anṣārī man's walled garden, and the man's family were with him and then Samurah would go to his date palms and the man would suffer distress from that and it would be hard for him. The

man asked him if he could exchange [some date palms in another location] with him but he refused. So he came to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned that to him. The Prophet ﷺ asked him to sell him [the date palms] but he refused, and he asked him to take in exchange [some date palms in another location] but he refused. He said to him, "So give it to him and you will have such and such," a command in the sense of [a recommendation] trying to stimulate his desire for it, but he refused. So he said to him, "You are causing trouble and harm." The Prophet ﷺ said to the Anṣārī, "Go and uproot his date palms."[25] It has also been narrated from Abū Jaʿfar as a *mursal* hadith. Aḥmad said, in the narration of Ḥanbal, after this hadith had been mentioned to him, "Everything that is of this nature and in which there is harm must be prevented. Then if the person accepts [well and good], and if not the sultan must compel him. He should not harm his brother with that. In it [preventing him by force] there is profit and benefit for him."

Abū Bakr al-Khallāl narrated in a version of ʿAbdullāh bin Muḥammad ibn ʿAqīl from ʿAbdullāh ibn Salīṭ ibn Qays from his father that a man of the Anṣār had some date palms belonging to another man in his

walled garden, and the owner of the date palms continually visited the date palms in the morning and the evening. That was very hard for the owner of the walled garden, and he went to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned it to him. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Accept some date palms close to the walled garden from him in exchange for your date palms.” He replied, “No, by Allah!” He said, “Then accept two from me.” He said, “No, by Allah!” He said, “Then give them to me.” He said, “No, by Allah!” He [the transmitter] said, “So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeated [offers] to him continuously but he refused. Then the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to give him date palms in place of his date palms.”

Abū Dāwūd narrated in *al-Marāsīl* the version of Ibn Isḥāq from Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥibbān that his paternal uncle Wāsiʿ ibn Ḥibbān said, “Abū Lubabah had a fruit-bearing palm tree in a man’s walled garden, and he spoke to him saying, ‘You walk through my walled garden to your palm tree, so I will give you a similar [tree] in your own walled garden and I will get it away from me,’ but he refused. So he spoke to the Prophet ﷺ about it, and he said, ‘Abū Lubābah, accept a fruit-bearing date palm similar to

the one you have and receive it among your property, and abstain from inflicting on your companion what he dislikes.' He answered, 'I will not do it.' So he said, 'Go and get the like of his fruit-bearing palms for him in his walled garden and then put a wall above that, because there is [to be] no causing harm (*ḍarar*) in Islam nor returning harm (*ḍirār*)."[26]

There is in this and the preceding hadith that he was compelled to [accept] a substitute, since by leaving it as it was there would be harm for his partner or neighbour. This is similar to requiring pre-emption in order to prevent the difficulty of a new partner.

By that some have sought to show that it is obligatory for a partner who refuses to build to do so, and that it is obligatory [for him] to sell if the division is difficult. It has been narrated in a *marfūʿ* hadith of Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr from his father, "There is to be no dividing (*taʿḍiyah*) of the inheritance into portions unless the division (*qismah*) is possible."[27] Abū Bakr [here] is Ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAmr ibn Ḥazm. That is what Imam Aḥmad said, and so the hadith in this case is *mursal*. *Taʿḍiyah* is the same as *qismah*. Whenever division is difficult because of the fact that

what is to be divided will be damaged by its division and when one of the partners seeks for it to be sold [so that the sum can be divided], then the other is compelled [to accept its sale], and the price [realised] is divided, and that is what Aḥmad and Abū ʿUbayd and other imams stated clearly.

As for the second, which is prevention of a neighbour from benefiting and profiting from his property, then if that [his property] will be harmed by the one who benefits from his property he has a right to refuse it, such as for example, someone who has a weak wall which is not able to have a timber cast onto it. As for cases where it would not cause harm, there is the question as to whether or not he is required to facilitate him to do it and whether or not it is *ḥarām* for him to prevent it. Those[28] who said with respect to the first division that an owner is not prevented from transacting in his own property, even if he causes harm to his neighbour, say here that the neighbour has the right to prevent someone transacting with his property without his permission. Those[29] who said there that it is prevented, differ here in two ways: first, here they choose prevention and this is the position of Mālik. Second, that prevention is not permissible and

this is the school of Aḥmad with respect to casting a timber up on one's neighbour's wall. Ash-Shāfiʿī, in his older position, Isḥāq, Abū Thawr, Dāwūd, Ibn al-Mundhir and ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb al-Mālikī agreed with him, and Mālik related it of one of the *qāḍīs* of Madīnah.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let none ofyou prevent his neighbour fixing atimber onhiswall." Abū Hurayrah said, "Why is it that I see you averse to it? By Allah! I will cast it between your shoulders!"[30] ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb gave the judgement that Muḥammad ibn Maslamah should allow his neighbour's water to pass over his land and he said, "By Allah! you will allow it to pass through, even if it is over your belly!"[31]

With respect to compelling someone to do that there are two narrations from Imam Aḥmad. The position of Abū Thawr is [for the ruler] to require that water flows through his neighbour's land if he makes it flow in ducts and tubes within his land. Ḥarb al-Kirmānī transmitted that from him.

One of those things which it is forbidden to refuse, because it would cause harm, is the refusal of water and pasture. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū

Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not refuse surplus water in order to deny [someone] pasture.”[32]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that a man asked, “Prophet of Allah, what thing is it impermissible to refuse?” He answered, “Water.” He asked, “Prophet of Allah, what thing is it impermissible to refuse?” He answered, “Salt.” He asked, “Prophet of Allah, what thing is it impermissible to refuse?” He answered, “That you do good is better for you.”[33]

There is also in it that the Prophet ﷺ said, “People share in three: water, fire and pasture.”[34]

Most of the people of knowledge take the position that surplus flowing water and spring water absolutely may not be refused, whether or not someone says that the water is the property of the landowner. This is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Abū ʿUbayd and others. The stated position of Aḥmad is that it is obligatory to give it generously free of charge without taking compensation for drinking it, watering animals, and watering crops. The *madhhab* of Abū Ḥanīfah and ash-Shāfiʿī is that it is not obligatory to provide it liberally in the case of crops.

They differ as to whether it is absolutely obligatory to provide it, or if it is in the case where it is close to pasture and refusing it would lead to denial of pasture, and among our colleagues and the people of ash-Shāfiʿī they took two positions. In the words of Aḥmad there is that which shows that what is meant in particular is denial [of water] close to pasture. As for Mālik, he does not regard it as obligatory to give liberally surplus water that is owned by virtue of owning its spring and course, except in the case of someone in dire straits such as what is gathered in receptacles. According to him it is only obligatory to give the surplus of water which one does not own.

According to ash-Shāfiʿī the judgement on pasture is similarly that one may refuse its surplus except in wasteland. The *madhhab* of Abū Ḥanīfah, Aḥmad and Abū ʿUbayd is that surplus pasture absolutely may not be refused. Some of them said that no one may refuse water and pasture except for people on the frontiers in particular –which is the position of al-Awzāʿī – because when the water and pasture of frontier people depart they cannot move from their place out beyond the main part of the lands of Islam and its people.

As for the prohibition of refusing fire, a party of the people of *fiqh* interpret it to mean the prohibition of taking fire from it rather than of specific flaming embers. Some interpret it to mean the refusal of stones for striking fire, but that is unlikely. If it were to be interpreted as refusing the use of fire for lighting, and giving what is surplus to the needs of its owner to someone who wants to warm himself at it, or cook food at it, etc., then that is not unlikely.

As for salt, it probably can be interpreted to mean refusing someone to take it from permissible mines, because salt is from opencast mines that cannot be owned by working them nor by being granted it, which is stated by Aḥmad. There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that the Prophet ﷺ made a grant to a man of salt [mines], and someone said to him, "Messenger of Allah, it is of the same standing as copious spring water," and so he took it back from him.[35]

Something that is included in the general sense of his saying ﷺ, "There is to be no causing harm," is that Allah has not imposed as a task on His slaves that they do anything at all that will cause them harm. What He commands them to do is the very essence of what is right for their *dīn* and their world, and that which He

forbids them is the very essence of that which will corrupt their *dīn* and their world. Moreover, He has also not ordered His slaves to do anything that will harm their bodies, and so for this reason He drops the demand for purification with water from those who are ill, and He says:

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ حَرَجٍ

"Allah does not want to make things difficult for you,"[36] and He drops the demand for fasting from someone who is ill or travelling, and He says:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

"Allah desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you."[37] He drops the demand to avoid the prohibitions of *iḥrām* such as cutting the hair, etc., for someone who is ill or has some infection or trouble in his scalp, and He orders instead a substitute (*fidyah*). There is in the *Musnad* that Ibn ʿAbbās said, "Someone asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ 'Which of the *dīns* are most beloved to Allah?' He answered, 'The liberally generous *ḥanīfiyyah*.[38]'"[39] There is a hadith of

ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I have been sent with the liberally generous *ḥanīfiyyah*."[40]

In this same sense there is that which is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ saw a man walking. Someone remarked, "He vowed that he would perform the Ḥajj walking," so he said, "Allah has no need of his walking, so let him mount," and in another version, "Allah has no need of this one tormenting himself."[41]

There is in the *Sunan* from ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that his sister vowed to walk to the House, and so the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah will not do anything with your sister's misery, so let her mount."[42]

The people of knowledge differ on the judgement on someone who vows to perform the Ḥajj walking. Some say that he is not obliged to walk and has the right to mount in every circumstance. That is one narration from Aḥmad and al-Awzāʿī. Aḥmad said, "Let him fast three days." Al-Awzāʿī said, "He is obliged to pay the expiation of an oath." The best known position is that he is obliged to do that if he is able. If he is unable to do it, then some say that he must mount when he is unable to walk and there is

nothing against him, which is one of two statements of ash-Shāfiʿī.

Some say that he must – along with that – pay the expiation of his oath, which is the position of ath-Thawrī, and of Aḥmad in one version.

Some say that on the contrary he is due blood [a sacrifice on Ḥajj], which a party of the right-acting first generations said, among them ʿAṭā', Mujāhid, al-Ḥasan, al-Layth, and Aḥmad in one narration.

Some say that he should give the hire of the mount as *ṣadaqah*, and that is narrated of al-Awzāʿī, and he told that of ʿAṭā', and it is also narrated from ʿAṭā', "He must give the amount of his expenditure at the House."

A party of the Companions and others said that mounting does not discharge his oath, but he must perform the Ḥajj again the next year and walk the portion that he performed mounted, and he [may] perform mounted that which he walked. Some added that he must sacrifice a *hady* offering, and this is the position of Mālik in the case where the greater portion [of the journey] was while mounted.

Another matter that would also be included in the general meaning of it is that whoever owes a debt

should not have repayment demanded of him if it puts him in serious difficulty, but he should be deferred until easier circumstances. Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَى مَيْسَرَةٍ

"If someone is in difficult circumstances, there should be a deferral until things are easier."[43] The majority of the people of knowledge take this position contrary to that of Shurayḥ when he said, "The *āyah* is particularly to do with debts arising from usury in the period of ignorance [before Islam]". The majority stand by the general meaning of the expression. The indebted person should not be made to pay from that which would cause him harm if he was to take it out from his property, such as his clothing, his residence which he needs, his servant, etc., nor that which he needs to trade with, for his expenditure and his family's expenditure, and this is the *madhhab* of Imam Aḥmad.

1 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (3:77), Mālik in *Muwaṭṭa'* (2:745)

2 Ibn Mājah in *as-Sunan* (2340)

3 In *as-Sunan* (2341)

4 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in *as-Sunan* (4:228)

5 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in *as-Sunan* (4:227)

6 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in *as-Sunan* (4:228)

7 Abū Dāwūd (3635), at-Tirmidhī (1940), Ibn Mājah (2342)

8 At-Tirmidhī (1941)

9 Sūrat an-Nisā': 12

10 Sūrat an-Nisā': 13-14. The translation reflects the Warsh *riwāyah*, whereas in the Ḥafṣ *riwāyah* it is "He will admit..."

11 At-Tirmidhī (2117), also Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd (2867), Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī and ʿAbd ar-Razzāq

12 *Ajnabī* "a stranger" may include distant relatives who do not inherit, or someone who is not a relative as opposed to relatives. Trans.

13 Al-Bukhārī, Muslim (1628)

14 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 231. *irāran* means also to cause harm and not just retaining them "by force". Ed.

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 228

16 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 233. "Put under pressure" is here the translation of *tuḍārru* "caused harm". Ed.

17 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 233

18 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 237

19 It means a sale into which someone is coerced. A sale undertaken under the pressure of debt and circumstances, when the person sells at a loss because of a need for money, can also be understood from this, and the people of knowledge strongly disapprove of such a sale. Trans.

20 Abū Dāwūd (3382)

21 Excessive profit. Ed.

22 Since the transaction amounted to a concealed way of taking a loan at interest, whether deliberately or accidentally. Trans.

23 At-Tirmidhī (1283), Aḥmad (5:414) and others

24 *Al-Marāsīl* (408)

25 Abū Dāwūd (3636)

26 Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (407)

27 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (4:219)

28 i.e. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām ash-Shāfiʿī. Ed.

29 i.e. Imām Mālik and Aḥmad. Ed.

30 Al-Bukhārī, Muslim (1609)

31 Mālik in the *Muwaṭṭa'* (2:746)

32 Al-Bukhārī (2353), Muslim (1566)

33 Abū Dāwūd (3476)

34 Abū Dāwūd (3477)

35 Abū Dāwūd (3064)

36 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 6

37 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 185

38 *Ḥanīfiyyah*: the ancient *ḥanīf* way of Ibrāhīm. Trans.

39 Aḥmad (1:236)

40 Aḥmad (6:116)

41 Al-Bukhārī (1865), Muslim (1642)

42 At-Tirmidhī (1544) also an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah

43 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 280

الحديث الثالث والثلاثون

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُما أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿لَوْ يُعْطَى النَّاسُ بِدَعْوَاهُمْ ؛ لَادَّعَى رِجَالٌ أَمْوَالَ قَوْمٍ، وَدِمَاءَهُم، وَلَكِنَّ الْبَيِّنَةَ عَلَى الْمُدَّعِي، وَ الْيَمِينُ عَلَى مَنْ أَنْكَرَ﴾.

Claimants and Counter-claimants

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If people were to be given according to what they claim, men would claim people's property and lives, but corroborative testimony is required of a claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim]." A good hadith which al-Bayhaqī[1] and others related as above, and a part of which is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books.

They narrated the basis of this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Ibn Jurayj from Ibn Abī Mulaykah from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If people were to be given according to their claims, some people would claim men's lives and their wealth,

but the oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made."[2]

They also narrated it in a narration from Nāfiʿ ibn ʿUmar al-Jumaḥī from Ibn Abī Mulaykah from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ gave the judgement that the oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made.[3]

The wording which the Shaykh has chosen is that which Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ chose before him in the *al-Aḥādīth al-kulliyāt* (Universal Hadith) and he said, "Al-Bayhaqī narrated it with a good chain of transmission."

Al-Ismāʿīlī narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in a narration of al-Walīd ibn Muslim, "Ibn Jurayj narrated to us from Ibn Abī Mulaykah from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'If people were to be given according to their claims, men would claim the lives of men and their properties, but corroborative testimony is demanded of the one who seeks [a claim], and the oath is the right of the one from whom [a claim] is sought.'"

Ash-Shāfiʿī narrated,[4] "Muslim ibn Khālid informed us from Ibn Jurayj from Ibn Abī Mulaykah from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Corroborative testimony is demanded of the claimant.'" Ash-Shāfiʿī said, "I think, but I cannot

unequivocally affirm, that he said, ‘And the oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made.’”

Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn Lubābah, the Andalusian *faqīh,* narrated from ʿUthmān ibn Ayyūb al-Andalusī – and he described him as being of high merit – from Ghāzī ibn Qays from Ibn Abī Mulaykah from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ and then he mentioned this hadith, and he said, “...but corroborative testimony is required of the claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim].” Ghāzī ibn Qays al-Andalusī was a great right-acting man who listened directly to Mālik, Ibn Jurayj and people of their generation. Ibn Jurayj is missing from this chain of transmission, and Allah knows best.

Imam Aḥmad and Abū ʿUbayd used the fact that the Prophet ﷺ said, “corroborative testimony is required of a claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim],” as a proof and this shows that the wording in their view is sound and may be used in proof.

In the same sense there are many hadith. In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is that al-Ashʿath ibn Qays said, “There was a dispute between me and a man about a well, and we took the dispute to the Messenger of

Allah ﷻ. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, '[Produce] your two witnesses, or [he has the right to] his oath [denying your claim].' I said, 'In that case he will swear and he will not care [that it is false].' So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Whoever swears an oath by which he demands property as his right and in which he is lying, will meet Allah and He will be angry with him.' So Allah revealed the confirmation of that, and then he recited this *āyah*:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَناً قَلِيلاً

'Those who sell Allah's contract and their own oaths for a paltry price...'[5]."[6] In the narration of Muslim there is after his saying, "Then let him swear," that he said, "There is nothing for you but that." Muslim also narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Wā'il ibn Ḥujr from the Prophet ﷺ.[7]

At-Tirmidhī narrated in a hadith of al-ʿArzamī from ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said during his *khuṭbah*, "Corroborative testimony is required of the claimant, and the oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made."[8] He said, "About his chain of

transmission there is some contention. Al-ʿArzamī is regarded as weak in hadith because of his memorisation." Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated in a version of Muslim ibn Khālid az-Zanji – in whom is some weakness –from Ibn Jurayj from ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Corroborative testimony is required of a claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim] except in the [fifty oaths called] *qasāmah*."[9]

Hadith memorisers narrated it from Ibn Jurayj from ʿAmr as a *mursal* hadith.

He also narrated it in a version of Mujāhid from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said in his address on the day of the Opening [of Makkah to Islam], "The one against whom claim is made has more right to swear an oath unless corroborative testimony is established."[10] Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it, and according to him it is from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, but about his chain of transmission there is some discussion. Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated this same sense in many different but weak ways.

Ḥajjāj aṣ-Ṣawwāf narrated from Ḥumayd ibn Hilāl that Zayd ibn Thābit said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ

gave the judgement, ‘Whichever man seeks something from another man, then the one from whom he seeks has more right to swear an oath [denying the claim].’” Abū ʿUbayd and al-Bayhaqī narrated it and his chain of transmission are trustworthy people except for the fact that I do not think that Ḥumayd ibn Hilāl met Zayd ibn Thābit. Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated it with the additional words, “Without witnesses.”[11]

An-Nasā’ī narrated it in a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, and he said, “Two disputants came to the Prophet ﷺ and one of them claimed something as his right from the other. The Prophet ﷺ said to the claimant, ‘Establish your evidence.’ So he said, ‘Messenger of Allah, I have no evidence,’ so he said to the other, ‘Swear by Allah the One Whom their is no god but He, that he has nothing against you or in your possession.’”[12]

It has been narrated of ʿUmar that he wrote to Abū Mūsā, “Corroborative testimony is required of the claimant, and the oath is the right of the one who denies.” Zayd ibn Thābit passed judgement on that basis against ʿUmar and in favour of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and neither of them rejected it.

Qatādah said, “The ‘decisive speech’[13] which Dāwūd ﷺ was given was that corroborative

testimony is required of a claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim]."

Ibn al-Mundhir said, "The people of knowledge are unanimously agreed that corroborative testimony is required of the claimant and that the one against whom the claim is made has the right to swear an oath." He said, "The meaning of his saying, 'Corroborative testimony is required of a claimant,' is that by it he demands what he claims as his right because it [the corroborative testimony] is a duty for him on the basis of which he will be judged. The meaning of his saying, 'The one against whom the claim is made has the right to swear an oath,' i.e. by it he will free himself of any liability because that is a duty for him on the basis of which he will be judged in any case."

The *fuqahā*' of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalis] and of ash-Shāfiʿī differ as to the explanation of the terms the claimant and the one against whom the claim is made.

Some say that the claimant is the one of the two disputants who is allowed to remain silent, and the one against whom the claim is made is the one of the two who is not allowed to remain silent.

Some say that the claimant is someone who demands a matter which is concealed and contrary to the original state of affairs or [contrary to] what is openly apparent, and the one against whom the claim is made is the opposite of that.

On the basis of that they put forward a case: when a *kāfir* couple become Muslims before having consummated the marriage and then they disagree, and the husband says, "We became Muslims simultaneously and so our marriage is still in effect," but the wife says, "No, one of us became Muslim before the other and so the marriage is annulled."

Then if we say that the claimant is the one who is allowed to remain silent, then the woman is the claimant [and who thus must provide evidence], and so the word that is accepted [if given in oath] is that of the husband, since he is the one against whom the claim is made, since he is not allowed to remain silent.

If we say that the claimant is the one who claims a hidden matter, then the claimant here is the husband because the two of them coming simultaneously into Islam is contrary to what is obvious [it is almost impossible for them both to have become Muslims at the same time], and so the word [when substantiated

by an oath] is that of the woman, since the apparent situation substantiates her word.

As for someone who has been entrusted [with the care of some goods] and he claims that they perished, such as someone who has been entrusted with a deposit and he claimed the destruction of the matter deposited with him, then it is said that he is the claimant since the original position is contrary to his claim [i.e. he received the goods in a good state] and he only is without need of corroborative testimony because the one who deposited the goods trusted him, and that trust necessarily requires the acceptance of his word.

Some say that the claimant who requires corroborative testimony is [really] the claimant who does so in order that he should be given his claim which is people's property or their lives, as is mentioned in the hadith. As for someone who is trusted, he does not claim something in order to be given anything. Some say that he is, on the contrary, the one against whom the claim is made, because if he is silent he is not left alone, but he must answer, and that the one who lodged the deposit is the claimant, since if he is silent he is left alone. If the person who

was entrusted claimed that he returned the trust to the one who entrusted it to him, then the majority take the position that his statement is accepted, just as is the claim that it perished. Al-Awzāʿī said, “His word is not accepted because he is a claimant.” Mālik, and Aḥmad in one narration, said, “If it is established with corroborative testimony that he accepted the matter entrusted to him, then his assertion that he returned it is not accepted without corroborative testimony.” One of our colleagues elaborated on that by saying that making sure of the presence of witnesses when paying rights which are established by corroborative testimony is obligatory, and thus that leaving it undone is to be neglectful and remiss, and by that it is required that one stand as guarantor [for loss or damage incurred]. Similarly some of them spoke with respect to paying an orphan’s property to him, that there must be corroborative testimony, because Allah, exalted is He, commands that one ensures the presence of witnesses for it (see Sūrat an-Nisā’: 6), and so it is obligatory.

The people of *fiqh* differ in two ways in this section:

First, that corroborative testimony is always required of the claimant, and that the one against whom the claim is made always has the right to take an oath. This is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah, and a party of the people of *fiqh* and hadith scholars such as al-Bukhārī agreed with him, and they extended that to cover every claim even [fifty] *qasāmah* [oaths]. They said that only the one against whom the claim is made may swear an oath. It was also their view that judgement may not be passed on the basis of a single witness and an oath [sworn by the claimant] since the oath is not the right of the claimant. They held the view that the oath should not be presented or offered to the claimant since it can only be with respect to the one who rejects [the claim] against whom the claim is made. They sought to prove [their stance] in the matter of *qasāmah* by that which Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd narrated, "Bushayr ibn Yasār al-Anṣārī narrated to us from Sahl ibn Abī Hathmah that he told him that a party of them went to Khaybar where they separated, and then came to find that one of them had been killed," and he mentioned the rest of the hadith. In it there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do you bring corroborative testimony about who it was that killed

him?" They said, "We have no corroborative testimony." He said, "Then let them [the accused] swear an oath." They said, "We are not contented with the oaths of the Jews." The Prophet ﷺ disliked that his blood should go uncompensated, and so he [himself] gave his diyah [compensatory payment paid to the relatives] as one hundred camels from the *zakāh*. Al-Bukhārī narrated it, and Muslim narrated it in an abridged form but he did not complete it. However, this narration contradicts the narration of Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al-Anṣārī from Bushayr ibn Yasār from Sahl bin Abī Hathmah. He mentioned the story of the killing about which he said, "They mentioned the killing of ʿAbdullāh ibn Sahl to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Fifty of you swear an oath against one of their men [that he was the murderer], so that he will pay in full.'" This is the well established and famous narration which is narrated in full in this wording in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books.[14] The imams who are memorisers of hadith mention that the narration of Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd is more sound than the narration of Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd aṭ-Ṭā'ī, because he was more majestic, more knowledgeable and had a better memory, and he was one of the

people of Madīnah, and had more knowledge of their hadith than did the people of Kufa.

Imam Aḥmad mentioned the divergence of Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd from Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd in this hadith, and he shook his hand [as if to shake off something] and said, "That is nothing. He narrated it according to what the people of Kufa say." He said, "Go to the hadith of the people of Madīnah, Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd." An-Nasā'ī said, "We know of no one who follows Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd in his narration from Bushayr ibn Yasār." Muslim said in the book *at-Tamyīz* (Discrimination): " Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd did not memorise it in its proper form since all of the traditions on this matter show that the Prophet ﷺ asked them for the *qasāmah* of fifty oaths, and there is not in any of their traditions that the Prophet ﷺ asked them for corroborative testimony. Saʿīd left out the *qasāmah*, and the mutual agreement of the traditions which contradict it lead us to pass the judgement that it is wrong, and Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd disagreed with him."

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said concerning the narration of Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd, "This is the narration of the people of Iraq from Bushayr ibn Yasār. The narration of the people of Madīnah from him is more clearly

established, and they are more closely related to him, and their transmission is more sound according to the people of knowledge."

I say that Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd abridged the story of the *qasāmah*, which is preserved in the hadith [in its full form]. An-Nasā'ī narrated the hadith of ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ demanded two witnesses from the heir of the murdered man about who killed him, and that he asked, "Where would I get two witnesses?" He answered, "Then you must swear fifty [oaths] as a *qasāmah*,"[15] and he asked, "How can I swear an oath about something that I do not know?" So he said, "Then you must demand of them to swear fifty [oaths] as a *qasāmah*." This hadith unites the two narrations of Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd and Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd, and that both of them left out something of the story. Saʿīd left out mention of the *qasāmah* of the claimants, and Yaḥyā left out mention of [the need for] corroborative testimony before the demand for the *qasāmah*, and Allah knows best.

As for the issue of a single witness along with an oath, those who deny judgement on the basis of a single witness and an oath seek to prove it by the hadith, “[Produce] your two witnesses, or [he has the right to] his oath [denying your claim],” and his saying ﷺ “You have the right only to that.” Qāḍī Ismāʿīl al-Mālikī spoke concerning this wording and he said, “The only one who narrated this was Manṣūr from Abū Wā’il, and all the other narrators disagree with him saying, ‘He asked him, “Do you have corroborative testimony or not?” And corroborative testimony is not restricted to two witnesses alone, but it comprises everything that makes the truth clear.’”

Others said it may be interpreted that he meant by his two witnesses every two types of evidence which bear witness on behalf of the claimant of the authenticity of his claim and by which the truth becomes clear. So that comprises the testimony of two men, the testimony of a man along with two women, and the testimony of one person along with an oath. In the case of *liʿān* Allah, glorious is He, established that oaths of a claimant have the same standing as witnesses.

By his saying in completion of the hadith, “You have the right only to that,” he did not mean a universal negation, but rather a particular negation, which is of that which the claimant wanted, that the decisive word should be his word without [the need for] corroborative evidence, but he is prohibited and refused that. His saying in the other hadith is similar, “But the oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made,” by which is meant the plain oath without any supporting evidence, and the beginning of the hadith shows that, which is his saying, “If people were to be given according to what they claim, men would claim people’s property and lives.” That shows that his saying, “The oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made,” only means the oath which, along with lack of evidence, severs any further argumentation. As for the oath that is for the sake of affirming the truth along with the presence of some testimony, then this is another type which is confirmed by another sunnah.

As for returning the oath to the claimant, then the well known position of Aḥmad is in accordance with Abū Ḥanīfah that it is not to be returned, and Aḥmad sought to prove that by the hadith, “But the oath is the

right of the one against whom the claim is made." He said in the narration from Abū Ṭālib from him, "It is not unlikely that someone will say to him, 'Swear an oath and take it as your right.'" A party of the *fuqahā*' of the later Companions chose that position and it is the verdict of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Abū ʿUbayd, and it is narrated of a party of the Companions. A *marfūʿ* hadith has been narrated concerning it which ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated, but there are some views about his chain of transmission.

Abū ʿUbayd said, "This is not removing the oath from its proper place, because the removal is that one does not judge by the oath for the desired purpose. As for if judgement is passed by it for that, and he is contented with the oath of his companion [the claimant], then he is the one who passes judgement on himself for that, because if he had wished he would have sworn an oath and become cleared and the claim against him invalidated.

The second statement on the issue is that preference is given to the stronger of the two contending parties, and the right to an oath assigned to him. This is the *madhhab* of Mālik, and similarly Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā mentioned in his irregular views that it

is the *madhhab* of Aḥmad. On the basis of this the issues we mentioned of judging by *qasāmah* oaths and by a single witness and an oath are accomplished, because when the side of the claimant in the case of *qasāmah* is strengthened by weak incomplete evidence then the oath is put on his side, and judgement is passed in his favour by it. Similarly, if the claimant establishes one witness, then his side is considered strong and he is asked to take an oath along with him and judgement is passed in his favour.

The [people of knowledge] have two ways in response to his saying, "Corroborative testimony is required of the claimant":

First, that this is singled out from this general rule by a proof.

Second, that his saying, "Corroborative testimony is required of the claimant" is not a general ruling because what is meant is the said claimant who is someone who has no decisive proof other than the claim, as in his saying, "If people were to be given according to what they claim, men would claim people's property and lives." As for the claimant who has a decisive proof strengthening his claim, then he is not comprised within this hadith.

The third way is that corroborative testimony is everything that makes clear the soundness of the claimant's claim and testifies to his truthfulness, so that weak incomplete evidence along with a *qasāmah* oath is corroborative testimony, and a single witness along with an oath is corroborative testimony.

The fourth way which some take is to find fault with the soundness of this wording, meaning his saying, "Corroborative testimony is required of the claimant." They say that what is firmly established is his saying, "An oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made," and his saying, "If people were to be given according to what they claim, men would claim people's property and lives," showing that someone who claims [others'] blood [in retaliation for wounds or murder] and property must produce corroborative testimony proving what they claim. What is comprised in the general meaning of that is that someone who claims that a man killed someone from whom he would inherit, and he only has the word of the murdered man before he died, "So and so wounded me," that it is not sufficient, and that it alone by itself is not [even] weak incomplete evidence. This is the position of the main body, as opposed to the

Mālikīs, who regard it as weak incomplete evidence along with which the heirs must swear the oath [of *qasāmah*] and demand as their right the life [of the accused].

Comprised in the general meaning of that also is the case of someone who accuses his wife of adultery and imprecates her, because her blood may not be spilt merely because of his imprecation against her, and that is the position of the majority as opposed to ash-Shāfiʿī, and al-Jawzajānī chose his position because of the outward meaning of His saying ﷻ:

وَيَدْرَأُ عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ

"And the punishment is removed from her if she testifies four times by Allah..."[16] The first of them are those who interpret "punishment" as detention, and they say that she must be detained until she confirms it or she herself imprecates [her husband and declares that he is a liar], and on that there are conflicting views.

If a woman claimed that a man coerced her into adultery, then the main body take the position that nothing is established against him by her merely

claiming it. Ashhab of the Mālikīs said that she receives the value of her dowry if she swears an oath. Others of them said that she receives the value of her dowry without having to swear an oath. All of this is if she is someone of some standing and she claims that against someone who is suspect to whom the claim [made against him] fits. However if the one who is the target of that is one of the people of right action, then there are two different narrations from Mālik concerning her being punished with the hadd punishment for slander.

Shurayḥ and Iyās ibn Muʿāwiyah used to give judgement concerning disputed property on the simple basis of factual evidence which shows the truthfulness of one of the disputants. Shurayḥ gave the judgement with respect to kittens that two women claimed, each of whom said, “They are my cat’s kittens.” Shurayḥ said, “Cast this [kitten] towards her [the female cat of one of the women]. If she is settled, her milk is copious and she stretches herself out, then it is hers. If she flees and bristles then it is not hers.” Ibn Qutaybah said, “His saying, ‘Stretches herself out,’ means if she stretches herself out to allow the kitten to suckle, and ‘Bristles’ means that she shakes and bristles her hairs.”

Abū Bakr ash-Shāmī of the Shāfiʿīs gave judgements based on similar reasoning. Ibn ʿAqīl of our colleagues regarded his statement as being the weighty one.

It has been narrated of ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad that they approved of what al-Qāfah said about theft of property and that they based themselves on that.

Ibn Manṣūr narrated of Aḥmad, “If the owner of some crops said, ‘Your sheep ruined my crops during the night,’ then one has to look at the tracks and if his sheep’s tracks are not found in the crops, then the owner of the crops must produce corroborative testimony.” Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh said the same as Aḥmad, that it is because he is a claimant. This shows their agreement on finding it sufficient that one sees the tracks of the sheep, and that corroborative testimony is only required when there are no tracks.

His saying, “The oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made,” shows that everyone against whom a claim is made and who denies it, must then make an oath. This is the statement of most of the *fuqahā*’. Mālik said, “The oath is only obligatory for someone who denies [the claim against him] if there is some kind of social intercourse between the two claimants, for fear that fools might degrade leaders by

seeking their oaths [by merely making a claim whether true or false against them]."

According to him, if someone claims that a man expropriated his wealth or stole from him, and the one against whom the claim is made is not [someone who is] suspected of that, then the one against whom the claim is made is not required to make an oath. That is also narrated from al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and Ḥumayd ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān. Some narrate it as the view of the 'seven *fuqahā*' of Madīnah'. If the person [against whom the claim is made] is one of the people of virtue and standing, and someone who is not normally pointed out in such a connection, then according to Mālik the claimant is disciplined with some punitive measures.

His saying, "The oath is the right of the one against whom the claim is made," is also used to prove that the claimant has no right to an oath, but that he must provide corroborative testimony, and that is the position of the majority.

It is narrated of ʿAlī that he made a claimant swear an oath along with his corroborative testimony that that which his witnesses testified to was the truth. Shurayḥ, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUtbah ibn Masʿūd, Ibn Abī

Laylā, Suwwār al-ʿAnbarī, ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥasan and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī also did that, and it is also narrated of an-Nakhaʿī. Isḥāq said, “If the judge is in doubt, then it is obligatory to do that.”

Muhannā asked Imam Aḥmad about this issue and Aḥmad answered, “ʿAlī did it.” He asked him, “Is this correct?” He answered, “ʿAlī did it.” The Qāḍī confirmed this narration from Aḥmad, but he interpreted it as referring to the claim made against someone who was absent or against a minor, and this is not sound because ʿAlī only made a claimant swear an oath who was present with him along with his corroborative witness. These say that this oath is in order to strengthen a claim, if it is weak because of some doubt about the witnesses, as is the case with the oath that must be sworn to confirm the testimony of a single witness. Some of the earlier generations used to make witnesses swear an oath if they felt some doubt about them, for example, Suwwār al-ʿAnbarī the *qāḍī* of Baṣra, and Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā among our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] regarded that as permissible particularly in the case of a person appointed to investigate [judicial and administrative] injustices as distinct from *qāḍīs* [in general]. Ibn ʿAbbās said

concerning a woman called to testify on the subject of suckling [which establishes kinship prohibiting certain marriages] that she should be required to swear an oath, and Imam Aḥmad based himself on that.

The Qur'an shows that witnesses should be required to swear an oath if there is doubt about their testimony concerning the subject of bequests made on a journey. Allah, exalted is He, says:

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ شَهَادَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ . . . إِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ لاَ نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَناً وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَى وَلاَ نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ

"You who have *īmān*! when one of you is near to death and makes a will, two just men from among you should act as witnesses; or, if you are travelling when the misfortune of death occurs, two men who are strangers to you..." up to His saying, "...if you are in doubt, they should swear by Allah: 'We will not sell it for any price, even to a near relative, and we will not conceal the testimony of Allah.'"[17] Acting according to this *āyah* is not abrogated according to the main body of the right-acting first generations. Abū Mūsā and Ibn Masʿūd acted on the basis of it, and ʿAlī and Ibn

ʿAbbās gave *fatwā* on the basis of it, and it is the *madhhab* of Shurayḥ, an-Nakhaʿī, Ibn Abī Laylā, Sufyān, al-Awzāʿī, Aḥmad, Abū ʿUbayd and others. They said that the testimony of *kuffār* is acceptable with respect to the bequests of Muslims made when travelling, and they are required to swear an oath along with their testimonies. As to whether their oath is to complete the testimony so that one does not pass judgement on the basis of their testimony without an oath or whether it is of the category of seeking to strengthen because of some doubt, then this is open to interpretation. Our people regard it as a pre-condition, and it is the clear outward meaning of that which is transmitted from Abū Mūsā and others.

A party of the right-acting first generations took the position that requiring an oath along with a single corroborative witness is of the category of seeking to strengthen [the testimomy], so that if the judge takes the view that the single corroborative witness is sufficient because he is clearly just and honourable and because he is manifestly a truthful person, then it is sufficient to have his testimony without the oath of the claimant.

His saying:

فَإِنْ عُثِرَ عَلَى أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْماً فَآخَرَانِ يَقُومَانُ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الأَوْلَيَانِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِن شَهَادَتِهِمَا

"If it then comes to light that the two of them have merited the allegation of wrongdoing, two others who have the most right to do so should take their place and swear by Allah: 'Our testimony is truer than their testimony,'"[18] shows that if discrepancies in the evidence of the *kuffār* come to light, then the heirs of the deceased are made to swear an oath of their deception and lying, and then have the right to that to which they swore an oath. This is the position of Mujāhid and others of the right-acting first generations.

The meaning of that is that the oath is the right of the strongest of the two disputants, and here the claim of the heirs becomes stronger because of the discovery of the *kuffār* witnesses' lying, so that the oath is now offered to the claimants, and they swear an oath along with weak incomplete evidence, and they have the right to that which they claim, just as the closer relatives swear an oath in the case of *qasāmah* along with weak incomplete evidence and thus have a right to compensatory payment and the life [of the man

accused of murder] according to Mālik, Aḥmad and others.

Ibn Masʿūd passed judgement concerning a Muslim man who, on his deathbed, made two Muslim men who were with him his executors and handed the wealth he had with him over to them, making some *kuffār* witnesses to his appointment of them as executors. Then the two whom he had appointed arrived and gave some of the wealth to the heirs concealing some more of it. Later the *kuffār* [witnesses] arrived and bore witness against them about the wealth they had concealed, so he [Ibn Masʿūd] called for the two Muslims and made them swear an oath that he [the deceased] had not given them more than what they had given [the heirs]. Then he summoned the *kuffār* and they gave their testimony and swore oaths that their testimony was true. Then he made the heirs of the deceased swear an oath that the testimony of the Jews and Christians [witnesses] was true, which they did. He passed judgement against the two executors according to the oath they [the heirs] had sworn. That was during the khilafah of ʿUthmān. Ibn Masʿūd interpreted the *āyah* in that way, and so it was as if he compared the executors' oaths

and [of] the witnesses and regarded them as cancelling each other, there remaining along with the heirs the testimony of the *kuffār* [the heirs] then swearing an oath along with it and taking their due, because their side was rendered more weighty by the kuffar's testimony on their behalf, so that he had assigned the right to swear an oath to the stronger of the two disputants and had passed his judgement on that basis.

The *fuqahā*' differ as to whether or not an oath is demanded for all *adamic* (human) rights, as is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and is in one narration from Aḥmad, or whether on oath is only demanded in those cases in which judgement leads to an exemplary punishment, as is narrated in one version from Aḥmad, or whether an oath is only demanded in respect of that which it is sound to give generously away, as is the more well-known position of Aḥmad, or whether the oath is only required for every claim which does not need two witnesses, as is said to be the position of Mālik.

As for the rights of Allah ﷻ some of the people of knowledge say, "An oath is not taken for them in any circumstance," which is the position of our colleagues

and others, and Aḥmad stipulated that in the case of *zakāh*. Ṭāwus, ath-Thawrī, al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ and others said that. Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, al-Layth and ash-Shāfiʿī said that if he is suspect then he is required to swear an oath. It is similarly narrated of ash-Shāfiʿī with respect to someone who marries someone whom it is not permissible for him to marry and then later claimed ignorance, that he must be made to swear an oath in support of his claim. Isḥāq said something similar about divorce proclaimed by someone who is drunk, that he must swear an oath that he did not know [what he was doing], and that the person who divorces forgetfully [for example, of the fact that it is his last divorce, he having divorced his wife twice] should be made to swear an oath that he was forgetful. Al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and Salim ibn ʿAbdullāh similarly said about a man who said to his wife, "You are divorced," that he must swear an oath that he did not mean by that a threefold divorce, and then she is returned to him.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated in a version of Abū Hārūn al-ʿAbdī that Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī said, "Some people among the desert Arabs used to bring meat, and we had something in ourselves about it, and we

mentioned that to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said, ‘Endeavour to get their oaths that they slaughtered it, then mention the name of Allah and eat.’”[19] Abū Hārūn is extremely weak.

As to whether or not someone who is trusted with the rights of people so much so that his word is accepted should be made to swear an oath, there are three positions of the people of knowledge:

First, that he does not have to swear an oath because he affirmed him by trusting him, and there is no need for an oath along with affirmation, and by analogy with the judge or ruler, and this is the position of al-Ḥārith al-ʿUklī.

Second, that he must swear an oath because he is denying something and is therefore comprised under the general meaning of his saying, “The oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim],” and this is the position of Shurayḥ, Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Mālik in one narration, and most of our colleagues.

Third, because of his previous trustworthiness there is no need for him to swear an oath unless he is under some suspicion, and that is the textual statement of Aḥmad, and the statement of Mālik in a narration.

As for when some corroborative testimony is established which negates his trustworthiness, then the sense of his trustworthiness is diminished.

By his saying, “Corroborative testimony is required of a claimant and an oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim],” is only meant that he claims that which he claims of the man for himself and rejects that it belongs to the one against whom he makes the claim. For this reason he said at the beginning of the hadith, “If people were to be given according to what they claim, men would claim people’s property and lives.” As for someone who claims something which he is not claiming for himself denying his [the other’s] claim, then this is of less weight than the first. The claimant here must have corroborative testimony, but here one is satisfied with corroborative testimony which would not be sufficient for someone who claimed for himself and rejected [the claim of the other].

Some issues support that:

For example, lost property when someone produces a description of it, then it is unanimously agreed that it is given to him without any corroborative testimony. However, some say that it is permissible to give it to

him if the overwhelming view is that he is truthful, but it is not obligatory, as is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and Abū Ḥanīfah. Some say that it is obligatory to give it to him if there is a matching description, as is the position of Mālik and Aḥmad.

For example, the spoils of battle when someone comes claiming a part of it and that it used to belong to him and that the *kuffār* wrested it from him, and he can produce something which makes clear that it does belong to him, then that is sufficient. Aḥmad was asked about that when someone said to him, "Does one want corroborative testimony for that?" He answered, "He must have some explanation that shows that it is his, and if he knows that, then the amir gives it to him." Al-Khallāl narrated with his chain of transmission from ar-Rukayn ibn ar-Rabīʿ that his father said, "A horse of my brother's bolted and disappeared into ʿAyn at-Tamr, and he saw it in Saʿd's stable, and so he said, 'It is my horse!' Saʿd asked, "Do you have corroborative testimony?' He replied, 'No, but I will call it and it will neigh.' He called it and it neighed, and so he gave it to him." This can be interpreted to have been that it was seized by the enemy and then later recaptured by the Muslims, and

it can be interpreted to mean that it was recognised as a stray and put among the stray animals, so that then it was like lost property.

Another example is expropriated property when it is known that the rulers have been unjust, and someone seeks the return of [the property] from the *bayt al-māl*. * Abū'z-Zinād said, "ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to return unjustly taken properties to their owners without categoric corroborative testimony, and would be content with very little, and when he recognised and acknowledged the truth of the man's having been wronged he would return it to him and would not impose on him [the production of] very exact corroborative testimony, since he recognised the previous rulers' tyrannical treatment of people. The Iraqi *bayt al-māl* was emptied in redressing injustices so much so that [property] had to be brought to it from Shām. Our people mention that with respect to forcibly expropriated property in the hands of highway robbers and thieves, it is sufficient for the claimant to produce a description of the property as in the case of lost property. The Qāḍī mentioned this in his *Khilāf* (Contrary Views), and it is the outward sense of the words of Aḥmad.

1 Al-Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan al-kubrā* (10:252)

2 Al-Bukhārī (4550), Muslim (1711)

3 Al-Bukhārī (2514), Muslim (1711)

4 *Musnad ash-Shāfiʿī* (2:181)

5 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 77

6 Al-Bukhārī (6:25), Muslim (138)

7 Muslim (139)

8 At-Tirmidhī (1341)

9 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in his *Sunan* (3:111)

10 Ibid (4:218-219)

11 *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* (10:253)

12 An-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-kubrā* as mentioned in *Tuḥfat al-ashrāf*. Also narrated by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī in *Mushkil al-āthār*

13 *Faṣl al-khiṭāb* Sūrah Sad: 20

14 Al-Bukhārī (6898), Muslim (1669)

15 An-Nasā'ī (8:12)

16 Sūrat an-Nūr: 8

17 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 106

18 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 107

19 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (2367)

الحديث الرابع والثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الخُدْرِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الإِيمَانِ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Seeing Something Objectionable

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī ﷺ said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'Whoever of you sees something objectionable then let him change it with his hand, and if he is not able then with his tongue, and if he is not able then with his heart, and that is the weakest *īmān*'." Muslim narrated it (49).

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Qays ibn Muslim from Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb from Abū Saʿīd, and in the version of Ismāʿīl ibn Rajā' from his father from Abū Saʿīd, and according to him in the hadith of Ṭāriq he said, "The first person to begin with the *khuṭbah* before the prayer on the day of the *ʿĪd* was Marwān, and a man stood up to him and said, 'The prayer is

before the *khuṭbah*.' He said, 'It has been abandoned; what's the problem?' Abū Saʿīd said, 'As for this one, he has discharged the obligation upon him,'" and then he narrated this hadith.

Its meaning has been narrated in other ways. Muslim narrated the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every prophet whom Allah sent among a people before me had faithful disciples (*ḥawāriyyūn*) and companions among his people who took hold of his sunnah, and modelled themselves on his command. Then after them such successors followed them who would say what they do not do and do what they are not told to do, so whoever wages *jihād* on them with his hand is a *mu'min*, and whoever wages *jihād* on them with his tongue is a *mu'min*, and whoever wages *jihād* on them with his heart is a *mu'min*. There is not after that so much *īmān* as a grain of mustard."[1]

Sālim al-Murādī narrated from ʿAmr ibn Haram from Jābir ibn Zayd from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There will strike my ummah towards the end of time a terrible trial in their sultan, from which there will only be saved a man who recognises the *dīn* of Allah and wages *jihād* for it with

his tongue, his hand and his heart – that is the one who has degrees of precedence – and a man who recognises the *dīn* of Allah and affirms it, and the former has precedence over him, and a man who recognises the *dīn* of Allah and is silent over it, but if he sees someone who does good he loves him for it, and if he sees someone who does falsehood he hates him for it. That is the one who will be saved in spite of his slowness." This is unusual [*gharīb*] and his chain of transmission is interrupted and not continuous.

Al-Ismāʿīlī narrated a hadith of Hārūn al-ʿAbdī – who is extremely weak – from a *mawlā* of ʿUmar from ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "This ummah will soon perish except for three groups: a man who denies [falsehood, injustice and wrongdoing] with his hand, his tongue and his heart. Then if he is cowardly with his hand, with his tongue and his heart. If he is cowardly with his tongue and his hand, then with his heart."

He also narrated in the version of al-Awzāʿī from ʿUmayr ibn Hāni' from ʿAlī who heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "There will be trials after me in which the *mu'min* will not be able to alter [them] with his hand nor his tongue." I asked, "Messenger of Allah, how will

that be?" He answered, "They will reject [falsehood, injustice and wrongdoing] with their hearts." I asked, "Messenger of Allah, will that make their *īmān* decrease in any way?" He answered, "No, except as the rain drop reduces the rock." This chain of transmission is interrupted, and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated its sense in a hadith of ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit from the Prophet ﷺ with a weak chain of transmission.

All of these hadith show that it is obligatory to reject what is wrong as much as one is able, and that there is no avoiding doing so with the heart. Someone's whose heart does not reject what is wrong, that shows that *īmān* has gone from his heart.

It has been narrated that Abū Juḥayfah said, "'ʿAlī said, 'The first of your *jihād* in which you will be overcome is the *jihād* with your hands, then the *jihād* with your tongues and then the *jihād* with your hearts. Someone whose heart does not recognise what is right and reject what is wrong will be overturned and his uppermost will be made lowermost.'"

Ibn Masʿūd heard a man saying, "Someone who does not command what is right and forbid what is wrong has perished." So Ibn Masʿūd said, "Someone whose heart does not recognise right and wrong will

perish,"[2] indicating that the heart's recognition of right and wrong is obligatory and that no one is absolved from it, so that whoever does not recognise it will perish.

As for rejection by the tongue and the hand, it is only obligatory according to one's capacity. Ibn Masʿūd said, "Soon whoever of you lives will see wrongs for which he will not be able to do anything other than Allah knowing of his heart that he dislikes them." There is in the *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* from al-ʿUrs ibn ʿAmīrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When wrong action is done in the land, then someone who is present and disapproves of it is like someone who is absent [and does not witness it], but someone who is not present but approves of it is like someone who is present at it."[3] So someone who is present at wrong action and disapproves of it in his heart is just as someone who is not present at it since he is incapable of rejecting it with his tongue and hand [since he is not present]. Someone who is not present at it and is pleased with it is the same as someone who is present at it and able to reject it but who does not reject it, because being pleased with wrong actions is one of the ugliest of those things which are *ḥarām*, and he

neglects because of that rejecting the wrong action with his heart and that is an obligation on every single Muslim from which he is never absolved in any state.

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Someone who is present at an act of disobedience [of Allah and His Messenger] and disapproves of it is as someone who is not present at it. Someone who is not present at it and likes it is as if he were present at it."[4] This is like the one before it.

It is clear from these that rejection [of wrongdoing] with the heart is obligatory on every Muslim and in every state. As for rejection by hand and tongue it is according to ability, as in the hadith of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Any people among whom acts of disobedience are done, and moreover who are able to change [that wrong action] but who do not change it, then soon Allah will envelop them with punishment." Abū Dāwūd narrated it in this wording, and he said, "Shuʿbah said about it, 'Any people among whom acts of disobedience are done and who are more in number than the ones who do it...'"[5]

He also narrated the hadith of Jarīr, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘Any man who is among a people among whom acts of disobedience are done, and which they are able to change but they do not change, then Allah will strike them with punishment before they die.’”[6]

Imam Aḥmad narrated it and his wording is, “Any people among whom acts of disobedience are done and who are mightier and more numerous than those who do them and then they do not change it, Allah will encompass them all with punishment.”[7]

He also narrated the hadith of ʿAdī ibn ʿAmīrah that he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Allah will not punish the people in general because of the actions of the elite until they see wrong done openly in their presence and which they are able to reject but which they do not reject. When they do that, Allah will punish the elite and the ordinary people.’”[8]

He and Ibn Mājah also narrated the hadith that Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘Allah will question the slave on the Day of Rising, so much so that He will say, “What prevented you, when you saw wrong done, from rejecting it?” Then Allah

will instruct the slave in his argument, and he will say, "My Lord, I hoped for You and I separated from people."""[9]

As for that which at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated also from a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said in his *khuṭbah*, "Do not let awe of people prevent [any] man from saying the truth if he knows it." Abū Saʿīd wept and said, "We have seen things and we were in awe." Imam Aḥmad narrated it and in his [version] it had the extra words, "because it does not draw one's destined term nearer nor does it make one's provision further away that the truth should be said, or that one should remind [others] of something tremendous."[10]

Similarly, Imam Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let none of you despise himself." They asked, "Messenger of Allah, how can any of us despise himself?" He answered, "He sees the command of Allah on him about which he should say something and then he says nothing about it. So Allah will say to him on the Day of Rising, 'What prevented you from saying such-and-such for My sake?' and he will say, 'Fear of people.'

Allah will say to him, 'It was I alone that you should more correctly have feared.'"[11]

These two hadith are interpreted to mean that the matter that prevented the rejection [of the wrong] was purely awe rather than the fear which would absolve one of the [obligation of] rejecting.

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said, "I asked Ibn ʿAbbās, 'Should I tell the ruler to do right and forbid him from doing wrong?' He answered, 'If you are afraid that he will kill you, then no.' Then I asked him again and he said something similar to me. Then I asked him again and he said something similar to me, and he added, 'If you must do it, then [do it] confidentially between you and him.'"

Ṭāwus said, "A man came to Ibn ʿAbbās and asked, 'Should I not stand up to this ruler and command him [to do right] and forbid him [from doing wrong]?' He answered, 'Do not be a trial for him.' He asked, 'What do you think if he tells me to disobey Allah?' He answered, 'That is what you meant, so then be a man.'" We have already mentioned the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd in which there is, "Then later their successors followed after them... so whoever wages *jihād* on them with his hand is a *mu'min*..." This shows that one must

wage *jihād* against rulers with one's hand, but Imam Aḥmad rejected this hadith in the version of Abū Dāwūd. He said, "It contradicts the hadith in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded patient endurance of rulers' tyranny." However, some responded to that, saying that changing something by one's hand does not necessarily entail fighting, and Aḥmad also stated that, in a version narrated from him by Ṣāliḥ, when he said, "Changing things by one's hand is not done with sword and weapons," so then waging *jihād* against rulers with one's hand means that by one's hand one removes the abhorrent things that they have done, for example that one pours out their wine or breaks their musical instruments, and the like of those, or that by one's hand one undoes injustices they have commanded if one has the ability and capacity to do that. All of this is permissible, and none of it is of the category of fighting them, nor of rising in insurrection against them the prohibition of which has been transmitted, because this is the thing because of which it is most feared that the person commanding [the good] alone might be killed.

As for rising in insurrection against them with the sword, then trials and civil strife are to be feared from

this that would lead to shedding Muslims' blood. Yes, if one fears through proceeding to reject [the wrong action and injustice of] kings that it would harm one's family or neighbours, then at that point one does not have to stand up to them, because it will expose others to harm. Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ and others said that. Along with this, when one fears that they will raise the sword against one, or the lash, or prison, or shackles, or exile, or the seizure of property, or other types of harm, then the obligation to command and forbid them [from doing wrong] is removed, and the imams, among them Mālik, Aḥmad, Isḥāq and others, have stated that.

Aḥmad said, "Do not oppose the ruler, because his sword is unsheathed."

Ibn Shibrimah said, "Commanding the right and forbidding the wrong are like *jihād*: a single person is required to bear patiently with [fighting against] two people and it is *ḥarām* for him to flee from them, but it is not obligatory to fight steadfastly against more than that."

However, if one is fearful of abuse or of hearing evil words [directed against one] then the obligation of rejecting [wrongs] is not removed because of that.

Imam Aḥmad stated that. If one can bear the harm [inflicted on one] and is strong enough for that then it is better [that one command the right and forbid the wrong]. Aḥmad also stated that. Someone asked him, "Has it not come from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, 'The *mu'min* should not humiliate himself,'[12] exposing himself to such trials as he has not the strength to bear?" He answered, "This is not from that." What proves what he said is that which Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated of the hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best *jihād* is a just word in the presence of a tyrannical ruler."[13]

Ibn Mājah narrated the same sense in a hadith of Abū Umāmah.[14]

There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār with a chain of transmission in which there is one person who is unknown, that Abū ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ said, "I asked, 'Messenger of Allah, which of the martyrs are most honoured by Allah?' He answered, 'A man who stood up to a tyrannical ruler and commanded him to do right and forbade him to do wrong, and so he [the ruler] killed him.'"[15] Its meaning has also been narrated in other ways all of which have some weakness.

As for the hadith, “The *mu’min* ought not to humiliate himself,” it only shows that if someone knows that he cannot bear the harm and cannot patiently endure it, he must not take on commanding [the right], and this is true. The speech [above] is only about someone who knows that he himself is patient. The imams said that, such as Sufyān, Aḥmad, al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ and others.

There has been narrated from Aḥmad that which shows that someone may suffice himself with rejecting [wrongs] with his heart. He said in a narration from Abū Dāwūd, “We hope that if someone rejects [wrongs] with his heart he is safe, but that if he rejects them with his hand it is better.” This is on the interpretation that he fears [for himself and others] as is clearly stated in the narrations of more than one. Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā told of two narrations from Aḥmad concerning the obligatory nature of having to reject the wrong actions of someone whom one knows will not accept it from one, and he declared his statement that it is obligatory to be sound, and that is the position of most of the people of knowledge. Someone spoke to one of the right-acting first generations about this and he said, “It will be a [valid] excuse for you.”

This is as Allah informed us that the people who rejected those who transgressed the Sabbath spoke to those who asked them:

لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْماً اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَاباً شَدِيداً قَالُواْ مَعْذِرَةً إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

"'Why do you rebuke a people whom Allah is going to destroy or severely punish?' and answered, 'So that we have an excuse to present to your Lord, and so that hopefully they will gain *taqwā*.'"[16]

There has also been transmitted that which would show the removal of the need to command [right] and forbid [wrong] when there is going to be neither acceptance nor benefit from it. In the *Sunans* of Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and at-Tirmidhī there is that someone asked Abū Thaʿlabah al-Khushanī, "What do you say about this *āyah*:

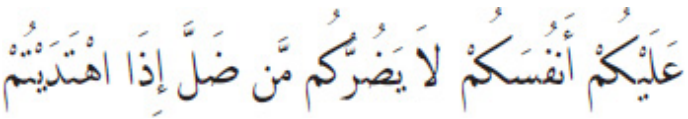
عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ

'You are only responsible for yourselves,'[17]?" and he answered, "By Allah, I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about it and he answered, 'Rather, command one another to do right and forbid one another to do

wrong, until when you see greed obeyed, and erroneous opinions and desires followed, and the world preferred [over the *ākhirah*] and the way in which every opinionated person is conceited with his own opinion, then you are only responsible for yourself, and [you must] leave alone the affairs of the generality of people.'"[18]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said, "Once while we were around the Messenger of Allah ﷺ he mentioned trial and civil strife and said, 'When you see people's contracts and covenants confused, and their trusts taken lightly, and they are like this,' and he intertwined the fingers [of his two hands]. So I stood up and asked, 'What shall I do at that? may Allah make me your ransom!' He said, 'Stick to your house, and keep control of your tongue. Take what you recognise [as good] and leave what you reject [as bad]. You must attend to affairs particularly appertaining to yourself, and avoid the affairs of the generality of people.'"[19]

Similarly it is narrated of a party of the Companions concerning His saying, exalted is He:



“You are only responsible for yourselves. The misguided cannot harm you as long as you are guided,”[20] that they said, “Its explanation has not yet come. Its explanation will only be at the end of time.”

Ibn Masʿūd said, “When hearts and passions become mixed up, and you are confused in sects, and each taste terrible affliction from the others, then let each person at that time command himself; at that time is the interpretation of this *āyah*.”

Ibn ʿUmar said, “This *āyah* is for peoples who will come after us. If they speak, it will not be accepted from them.” Jubayr ibn Nufayr said that a group of the Companions said, “When you see greed obeyed, and erroneous opinions and desires followed, and the way in which every opinionated person is conceited with his own opinion, then you are only responsible for yourself, and ‘The misguided cannot harm you as long as you are guided’.”

Makḥūl said, “Its interpretation has not yet come. When someone who admonishes is in awe [of those he admonishes] and those admonished reject [admonition], then at that time you are only responsible for yourself, and ‘The misguided cannot harm you as long as you are guided’.”

When al-Ḥasan recited this *āyah* he said, “How trustworthy it is, none more trustworthy! How capacious, none more capacious!”

All of this is interpreted to mean that someone who is incapable of commanding what is right or fears harm from it, is then absolved of it. The words of Ibn ʿUmar show that it is not obligatory on someone who knows that it will not be accepted from him, as is narrated in one version from Aḥmad. Similarly, al-Awzāʿī said, “Command whoever you think will accept it from you.”

His saying ﷺ concerning someone who rejects [wrong] with his heart, “and that is the weakest *īmān*,” shows that commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong are attributes of *īmān*, and shows that someone who is able to undertake any of the attributes of *īmān* and does it, is better than someone who leaves it out because of his incapacity for it. Something that also shows that is his saying ﷺ with respect to woman, “As for the shortcoming in her *dīn*, then it is that she spends days and nights without praying,”[21] indicating the days of the menstrual period, along with the fact that she is forbidden to pray at that time, and he regarded that as a

shortcoming in her *dīn*. That shows that someone who is able to perform a duty and does it is better than someone who is incapable of it and leaves it out, even if he is excused because of leaving it out, and Allah knows best.

His saying ﷺ, "Whoever of you sees something objectionable," shows that his act of rejecting [wrong] is dependent on actually having seen it. If it was concealed and he did not see it, but came to know of it, then what is stated of Aḥmad in most of the narrations is that he does not intervene to prevent it nor does he investigate something about which he has some doubt. There is another narration from him that one must uncover what is concealed if he becomes certain of it, and even if one heard the sound of *ḥarām* singing or musical instruments and knows the place in which they are, then one must object to it, because it is true that there is an objectionable act and one knows its location, so it is as if one had seen it. Aḥmad stated this, and he said, "If one doesn't know the place where it is taking place, then there is nothing against one."

As for climbing over walls because one knows that within is a gathering for something objectionable, then

the imams such as Sufyān ath-Thawrī and others have objected to that, and it is comprised under spying which is forbidden. Someone said to Ibn Masʿūd, “So and so’s beard drips with wine!” He said, “Allah has forbidden us to spy.”

Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā said in the book *al-Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyyah* (Rules of Governance), “If he has an overwhelmingly strong view that extraordinary pains are being taken to keep objectionable actions secret that involve forbidden matters [the consequences of] which cannot be corrected, such as adultery or murder, then in that case spying and advancing to uncovering [the wrongdoing] and investigating become permissible as precautionary measures and for fear of neglecting what cannot [later] be rectified of those types of perpetration of matters which are *ḥarām*. If it is of a lesser rank then it is not permissible to spy nor to try and uncover it.

The objectionable matters that it is obligatory to reject are those on which there is agreement. As for those about which there are different views, some of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] say, “It is not necessary to object to it in the case of someone who does it from his own exertion of his intellect (*ijtihād*) or following

and accepting the judgement of someone who has the capacity to exert their own intellect to reach a judgement (*mujtahid*) in an acceptable manner."

The Qāḍī made an exception in *al-Aḥkām as-Sultaniyyah* for that on which the difference of opinion is not strong and which would in itself lead to something about which there is agreement that it is prohibited, such as usury on [gold and silver] cash concerning which there is a weak disagreement is which leads to usury involving a deferment of payment about which there is agreement that it is *ḥarām*, and such as temporary marriage (*mutʿah*) which is a means leading to adultery. It is mentioned that Abū Isḥāq ibn Shāqilā mentioned that temporary marriage is clearly adultery.

Ibn Baṭṭah said, "A marriage on which a *qāḍī* has ruled is not invalid if he has made his own interpretation (*ta'wīl*), unless he has given a judgement to a man [in favour] of a contract of temporary marriage, or someone divorced three times in one verbal expression and he [the *qāḍī*] ruled that he [the husband] could take [his wife] back again without an [intervening marriage to another] husband, because

his ruling is rejected, and the person who does it is to be punished in an exemplary fashion."

It is stated of Aḥmad that one should object to someone playing chess, and the Qāḍī interpreted that to mean someone who plays it without having made an *ijtihād* or modelled himself on someone else [who is worthy of making *ijtihād*], and on this there are some views. Because what is stated from him is that someone who drinks such *nabīdh*[22] as there is disagreement about will be given a *ḥadd* punishment – and establishing *ḥadd* punishments is the furthest degree of objecting [to wrongs] – along with that the person is not regarded as a *fasiq* [someone who has acted wrongfully and whose testimony is unacceptable] according to him. That shows that one must object to everything on which there is disagreement [as to whether it is *ḥarām*] when the disagreement is weak because the Sunnah shows that it is *ḥarām*, but that the person who does that because of his following an interpretation is not thereby removed from the ranks of those whose testimony is accepted, and Allah knows best. Similarly, Aḥmad stated that one must object to someone who does not perfect his prayer and does not straighten his back in

the bowing and prostration, even though there is disagreement as to whether or not that is obligatory.

Know that commanding the right and forbidding the wrong is sometimes motivated by hope of its reward, and sometimes by fear of punishment because of not doing it, and sometimes by anger for the sake of Allah because of the violation of the matters He has made *ḥarām* or sacred, and sometimes by [the desire to give] sincere good counsel to the Muslims and by [the feeling of] mercy for them and hoping for their being saved from those matters that expose them to the anger of Allah and His punishment in the world and in the *ākhirah* into which they have cast themselves. Sometimes it is motivated by honouring the majesty of Allah and exalting His Greatness and from love of Him, and that He is worthy of being obeyed and so not disobeyed, of being remembered and so not forgotten, of being thanked and so not shown ingratitude (*kufr*) and that property and lives should be sacrificed [to safeguard] from violating His sacred and forbidden matters. As one of the right-acting first generations said, “I would wish that all the people would obey Allah [even if it meant] that my flesh was cut up in strips with scissors.” ʿAbd al-Malik

ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, may Allah show them both mercy, said to his father, “I wish that the cooking pots were boiling with you and me for the sake of Allah ﷻ.”

Whoever notes this station and the one before it will find that every harm he meets for the sake of Allah, exalted is He, will seem little to him, and he will probably make supplication for the one who harms him, as the Prophet ﷺ said, when his people struck him and he set to wipe the blood from his face, saying, “Lord, forgive my people because they do not know.”[23]

In any case, one must be gentle in objecting [to wrongs]. Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, “Only someone with three qualities may command what is right and forbid what is wrong: that he is gentle in his commanding and gentle in his forbidding, that he is fair and just in his commanding and fair and just in his forbidding, that he has knowledge of what he commands and knowledge of what he forbids.”

Aḥmad said, “People need encouraging persuasiveness and gentleness in commanding what is right without being too hard or stern except for the case of a man who openly does immoral wrong

actions, for he is due no respect." He said, "When the companions of Ibn Masʿūd used to pass by some people whom they saw doing something they deplored, then they would say, 'Gently! may Allah show you mercy. Gently! may Allah show you mercy.'"

Aḥmad said, "One must command gently and with humility, so that if they make him hear what he dislikes then he will not become angry and so wish to try and avenge himself."

1 Muslim (50)

2 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (8564)

3 Abū Dāwūd (4345)

4 Also narrated by al-Bayhaqī (7:266)

5 Abū Dāwūd (4338)

6 Abū Dāwūd (4339)

7 Aḥmad (4:361)

8 Aḥmad (4:192)

9 Ibn Mājah (4017) and Aḥmad (3:29)

10 At-Tirmidhī (2191), Ibn Mājah (4007) and Aḥmad (3:5)

11 Aḥmad (3:30) and Ibn Mājah (4008)

12 Ibn Mājah (4016), at-Tirmidhī (2254), Aḥmad (5:405)

13 Abū Dāwūd (4344), at-Tirmidhī (2174), and Ibn Mājah (4011)

14 Ibn Mājah (4012)

15 *Musnad al-Bazzār* (3314)

16 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 164

17 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 105

18 Abū Dāwūd (4341), at-Tirmidhī (30580, Ibn Mājah 4014) and others

19 Abū Dāwūd (4342)

20 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 105

21 Muslim (79)

22 *Nabīdh* is a preparation of an infusion dates and sometimes raisins, which if left becomes intoxicating. Trans.

23 Al-Bukhārī (3477) and Muslim (1792)

الحديث الخامس والثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿لا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَلاَ تَنَاجَشُوا، وَ لاَ تَبَاغَضُوا، وَلاَ تَدَابَرُوا، وَلا يَبِعْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَيْعِ بَعْضٍ، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللهِ إِخْوَانًا، الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لاَ يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلاَ يَخْذُلُهُ، وَلاَ يَكْذِبُهُ، وَلاَ يَحْقِرُهُ، التَّقْوَى هَاهُنَا﴾، وَيُشِيرُ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ ثَلاثَ مَرَّاتٍ، ﴿بِحَسْبِ امْرِئٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ، كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ: دَمُهُ، وَمَالُهُ، وَعِرْضُهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Brotherhood

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Do not envy each other, do not bid against each other,[1] do not hate each other, do not turn your backs on each other, and let none of you sell against the sale of another. Be, O slaves of Allah, brothers. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, he does not wrong him, fail to assist him, lie to him nor despise him. *Taqwā* is here,” and he pointed to his breast three times, “It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim.

All of a Muslim is sacred for a Muslim, his life, his property and his honour." Muslim narrated it (2564).

Muslim narrated this hadith in the version of Abū Saʿīd, the *mawlā* of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Kurayz, from Abū Hurayrah. The real name of this Abū Saʿīd is not known, but more than one have narrated from him, and Ibn Ḥibbān mentioned him in his *Thiqāt* (Trustworthy Narrators). Ibn al-Madīnī said, "He is unknown."

Sufyān ath-Thawrī narrated this hadith and said about it, "From Saʿīd ibn Yasār from Abū Hurayrah," but his attribution to Saʿīd ibn Yasār was an error because it was really Abū Saʿīd, the *mawlā* of Ibn Kurayz, which is what Aḥmad and ad-Dāraquṭnī said. Some of it has been narrated in another fashion.

At-Tirmidhī narrated it in a version of Abū Ṣāliḥ that Abū Hurayrah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, he does not betray him, lie to him or fail to assist him. All of a Muslim is sacred for a Muslim, his honour, his property and his life. *Taqwā* is here. It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim."[2]

Abū Dāwūd narrated from his words, "All of a Muslim..." until the end.[3]

They both narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in the version of al-Aʿraj from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not envy each other, do not bid against each other, do not hate each other, do not turn your backs on each other. Be, O slaves of Allah, brothers.”[4]

They narrated it in other ways from Abū Hurayrah.

Imam Aḥmad narrated in a hadith of Wāthilah ibn al-Asqaʿ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “All of a Muslim is sacred for a Muslim, his life, his honour and his property. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, he does not wrong him or fail to assist him. *Taqwā* is here,” and he pointed to his heart with his hand, “It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim.”[5]

Abū Dāwūd only narrated the end of it.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He does not wrong him and he does not surrender him.”[6] Imam Aḥmad narrated it, and his wording is, “A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He does not wrong him, fail to assist him or despise him. It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim.”[7]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not hate each other, do not envy each other, do not turn your backs on each other, and be, O slaves of Allah, brothers.”[8]

The same sense is narrated from Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq as both a *marfūʿ* hadith and as a *mawqūf* statement.[9]

His saying, “Do not envy each other,” means let none of you envy others. Envy is firmly fixed in human nature. It means that the human being dislikes being excelled in any merit by anyone of his species.

After this, there are a number of categories of people. Some exert themselves to remove [from the other] the blessing which they envy by wrong conduct in both word and deed. Moreover, some then exert themselves to get it for themselves, but some only strive to remove it from the person envied without getting it themselves and this is the worst and foulest of the two. This is the malicious envy which is blameworthy and forbidden. It was the wrong action of Iblīs when he maliciously envied Ādam when he saw that he [Ādam] excelled the angels because Allah created him with His hand, made the angles prostrate to him, taught him the names of every thing, and

made him reside in His proximity. So he continuously strove to get him out of the Garden until he got him out. It is narrated of Ibn ʿUmar that Iblīs said to Nūḥ, “There are two things by which the descendants of Ādam are destroyed: malicious envy – and because of malicious envy I was cursed and turned into an accursed *shayṭān* – and fervent desire (*ḥirṣ*[10]). Ādam was shown all of the Garden, and I attained what I needed from him by [his] fervent desire.” Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated it.

Allah describes the Jews as having the attribute of envy in many places in His book the Qur’ān, such as in His saying, exalted is He:

وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُم مِّن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّاراً حَسَداً مِّنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِهِم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ

“Many of the People of the Book would love it if they could make you revert to being *kuffār* after you have become *mu’minūn*, showing their innate envy now that the truth is clear to them,”[11] and His saying:

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ

“Or do they in fact envy other people for the bounty Allah has granted them?”[12]

Imam Aḥmad and *at-Tirmidhī* narrated a hadith of az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām from the Prophet ﷺ, “The illness of the nations who were before you is creeping towards you: malicious envy and hatred. Hatred is the cutting razor; that razor which cuts the *dīn* not that which cuts the hair. By the One in Whose hand is Muḥammad’s self! you will not have *īmān* until you love each other. Shall I not tell you something which if you do it, you will love each other? Spread [the greeting of] peace between you.”[13]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Beware of malicious envy, because malicious envy eats up good deeds like fire eats up kindling,” or he said, “herbage.”[14]

Al-Ḥākim and others narrated the hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The illness of the nations will happen to my nation.” They asked, “Prophet of Allah, what is the illness of the nations?” He answered, “*Al-ashir* and *al-baṭar*[15] and contending and competing with each other for the world, and hating and envying each other so much that it leads to exceeding all bounds, and killing without reason.”[16]

There is another category of people, who when they envy others, they do not act according to their envy nor exceed the bounds in word or deed against the one they envy. It has been narrated from al-Ḥasan that such a person does not become guilty of any wrong by that, and it has also been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith in many ways which are weak. There are two types in this respect:

First, someone who is not able to remove the envy from himself and is overcome by it, and then he is not guilty of any wrong because of it.

Second, someone who voluntarily enters into a dialogue with himself about that, and returns to it again and again, taking comfort from the hope of the removal of his brother's blessing. This closely resembles having a firm resolve to do acts of disobedience. On the punishment for that there are different views among the people of knowledge which will probably be mentioned elsewhere, insha'Allah, exalted is He. However, it is unlikely that this person will be safe from exceeding all bounds in his behaviour towards the person he envies, even if only in word, and thus by that become guilty of wrong action.

Another category of person, when envious, does not wish for the removal of the blessing from the other, but rather exerts himself to gain the like of the other's merits and wishes to be like him. If these merits or things that the other has over and above the envious person are worldly then there is no good in that, as when those who wanted the lesser worldly life said:

يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ

"Oh! If only we had the same as Qārūn has been given!"[17] If they are blessings and merits of the *dīn* then this is good. The Prophet ﷺ wished to die as a martyr (*shahīd*) in the way of Allah ﷻ. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from him that he said, "There is to be no envy except for in the case of two: a man whom Allah has given wealth, and so he spends it throughout the night and throughout the day, and a man whom Allah has given the Qur'ān and so he stands by it throughout the night and throughout the day,"[18] and this is unenvious emulation (*ghibṭah*) which he named envy metaphorically.

Another category, when they find envy in themselves, exert themselves to remove it and to show good treatment to the one they envy by doing him favours, making supplications for him and broadcasting his merits, and trying to remove what envy they find within themselves, so much so that they will transform it into love for their brother Muslim to become better than them and more meritorious. This is one of the highest ranks of *īmān*, and the person who does this is the complete *mu'min* who loves for his brother what he loves for himself. We have previously spoken about this when we made commentary on the hadith, "None of you have *īmān* until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

Many of the people of knowledge explain his saying ﷺ, "Do not bid against each other," as referring to a transaction called *najash* in sales, and it is that someone who does not want to buy goods increases the [price offered for] goods, either intending to benefit the seller by increasing his price [which another bidder will pay], or by intending to cause harm to the purchaser by increasing the price he has

to pay. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ forbade this transaction.[19]

Ibn Abī Awfā said, "The one who performs *najash* is a treacherous consumer of usury." Al-Bukhārī mentioned it.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, "They agree unanimously that the one who does it has disobeyed Allah ﷻ if he knows of the prohibition."

They differ about the [validity of the] sale [which is contracted through najash]. Some say that it is invalid, and it is one narration from Aḥmad that a party of his people choose. Some of them say that if the one bidding the price up is the seller himself or someone with whom the seller has agreed that he bid the price up, then the sale is invalid, because the prohibition here refers to the contracting party himself, and that if it is not like that, then the sale is not invalid, because it has been done by someone outside the transaction. In that manner it has been narrated of ash-Shāfiʿī that he regarded the reason that the transaction is sound to be the fact that the seller is not the one bidding the price up. Most of the *fuqahā*' take the position that the sale is absolutely sound, and that is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī,

and Aḥmad in one version narrated from him, except that Mālik and Aḥmad both affirm that the purchaser has the choice [to accept or reject the purchase] if he had not known at the time, and if he was tricked beyond the normal to an indecent extent [because the price is exorbitant beyond all norms, for example], which Mālik and some of Aḥmad's companions regarded as one third of the price. So if the purchaser chooses then to regard the sale as invalid, he has the right to do that, and if he wishes to retain [the goods], then the price is reduced by the [extra] amount he was duped into paying. Some of our colleagues [Ḥanbalīs] mention that.

It may be interpreted that the explanation of the "bidding against each other" mentioned in this hadith is more general than that, because the root of *najash* linguistically is "to draw forth a thing with conspiracy, trickery and deception," and from which the person who practises *najash* in sales is said to be *nājish* as the hunter linguistically is also called *nājish*[20] because he drives the game with trickery and deception towards himself. Then, the meaning is, "Do not try to deceive each other, and do not treat each other with conspiracy and [using] devices of deception." What is

meant by plotting and trying to deceive is to cause harm to a Muslim, either directly, or by getting his gain from him by way of that, which necessarily means making harm reach him and enter upon him. Allah ﷻ says:

وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ

"But evil plotting envelops only those who do it."[21] There is in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd from the Prophet ﷺ "Whoever acts dishonestly towards us is not of us, and deception and concealing things in order to deceive are in the Fire."[22] We have previously mentioned the *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, "Accursed is he who harms a Muslim or conspires against him," which *at-Tirmidhī* transmitted.

Therefore there is comprised, according to this reckoning, under the forbidden act of "bidding against each other" every type of transaction involving acting dishonestly such as concealing faults by failing to mention them and concealing them, or making faulty things appear excellent in the sale, trying to deceive someone who is very relaxed and does not know how to bargain. Allah describes the *kuffār* and the

munāfiqūn in His Book as conspiring against the Prophets and their followers. How excellent are the words of Abū'l-'Atahiyah:

> The world is nothing but *dīn*
> and the *dīn* is only noble qualities of character.
> Conspiracy and deception are in the Fire
> they are both attributes of the people of hypocrisy.

Conspiracy is only permitted against those whom it is permitted to cause harm, which is those *kuffār* who are waging war, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "War is deception."[23]

His saying ﷺ, "Do not hate each other," forbids Muslims to show hatred to each other for any other reason than for the sake of Allah, but rather [hatred should be shown] to the passions of the self, because Allah has made the Muslims brothers, and brothers love each other and do not hate each other. The Prophet ﷺ said, "By the One in Whose hand is my self! you will not enter the Garden until you have *īmān*, and you will not have *īmān* until you love each other. Should I not show you something which, if you

do it, then you will love each other? Spread the [greeting of] peace among you." Muslim narrated it, and we have mentioned in the preceding a number of hadith on the prohibition of mutual hatred and mutual malicious envy.

Allah forbids the *mu'minūn* those things which cause enmity and hatred among them, as He says:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ

"Shayṭān wants to stir up enmity and hatred between you by means of wine and gambling, and to debar you from remembrance of Allah and from *ṣalāh*. Will you not then give them up?"[24]

He has graciously bestowed on His slaves that which causes the affectionate union of their hearts, as He says, exalted is He:

وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا

"Remember Allah's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing."[25] He says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ

"It is He who supported you with His help and the *mu'minūn*, and unified their hearts. Even if you had spent everything on the earth, you could not have unified their hearts. But Allah has unified them."[26]

Due to this meaning, carrying slander between people is *ḥarām*, since in it there is that which will cause enmity and hatred between people, whereas lying is permitted by special licence when it can cause reconciliation between people, and Allah stimulates our desire for reconciling people, as He says, exalted is He:

لَّا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْراً عَظِيماً

"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin *ṣadaqah*, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward."[27] And He says:

وَإِن طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا

"If two parties of the *mu'minūn* fight, make peace between them,"[28] and He says:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ

"So have *taqwā* of Allah and put things right between you."[29]

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Abū'd-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Shall I not inform you of [what is] better than the rank of prayer, fasting and *ṣadaqah*?" They answered, "Yes, of course, Messenger of Allah." He said, "Putting things right between people, because the corruption of things between people is the cutting razor."[30]

Imam Aḥmad and others narrated the hadith of Asmā' bint Yazīd that the Prophet ﷺ asked, "Shall I not tell you of the worst of you?" They answered, "Yes, of course, Messenger of Allah." He said, "Those who repeatedly walk around with slander, who divide those who love each other, and who desire distress

and hardship for those who are free from evil qualities."[31]

As for hatred for the sake of Allah, it is one of the firmest handholds of *īmān*, and it is not comprised under the prohibition. Even if a man perceives something wrong in his brother and hates him for it, and at the same time the man is excusable for it, then the one who hates him is rewarded even if his brother is excusable, as ʿUmar said, "We used to know you when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was among us and the revelation descended, and when Allah would tell us your news. Certainly, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has been taken, and revelation has ceased, and we only recognise of you what we experience of you. Certainly, whoever of you shows us good we think good of and we love him for it. Whoever of you shows us bad we think bad of and we hate him for it. Your secrets are between you and your Lord ﷻ."

Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym said, "If you see a man doing good openly, but unknown to you he does wrong in secret, and you love him for it [the good] then Allah will reward you for your love of the good. If you see a man doing wrong openly, but unknown to you he does good in secret, and you hate him for the

wrong then Allah will reward you for your hatred of the wrong."

When the differences of people on the issues of the *dīn* increased, and their divisions increased, then because of that their mutual hatred and mutual abuse increased. All of them apparently showed hate for the sake of Allah; while sometimes someone may really be excused [because he is genuine] at other times he may not be excused, and may in fact merely be following his own whims and falling short in investigating enough to have real knowledge of that for which he hates the other person. A great deal of hatred comes about because of [a person] differing with someone whom [people] follow, [the followers] thinking that he [the one followed] only says the truth. This opinion is categorically a mistake. If it is meant that he [is the one who] says the truth in that in which others differ with him, then this opinion may sometimes be mistaken and sometimes strike the mark. It may be that the only thing which inclines one to that is simply one's own whims or a close companion or habit, all of which detract from this hatred being for the sake of Allah. It is obligatory for the *mu'min* to be truthful to himself and to guard himself against this, and

whatever most resembles it, to the furthest possible limit, and not to involve himself in it for fear of getting into that *ḥarām* hatred which is forbidden.

Here there is a hidden matter which we ought to clarify, which is that many imams of the *dīn* might say something which is not the strongest judgement in a domain in which they are legitimate mujtahids and be rewarded for the *ijtihād* with any mistake made concerning it rescinded. But the one who defends this statement of his does not have his standing in this degree, because he may only defend this statement because of the fact that the person he follows was the one who said it and if some other imam of *dīn* had said it he would not have accepted it nor defended it, nor would he have taken as a friend whoever agreed with it nor taken as an enemy whoever disagreed with it. Despite this he thinks that he only defends it for the sake of the truth because of the standing of the one he follows, but it is not like that, because the one he follows only intended to defend the truth even if he made a mistake in his *ijtihād*. As for this follower, he has mixed his defence of what he thinks is the truth intending to exalt the one he follows, and to make his words the uppermost and that no mistake will be

ascribed to him. This is a secret machination which detracts from his intention of defending the truth. So understand this, because it is a tremendous understanding, and Allah guides whom He wills to a straight path.

Concerning his saying, “Do not turn your backs on each other,” Abū ʿUbayd said, “Turning backs on each other means severing relations and forsaking each other and it is derived from when a man turns his back on his companion and turns his face away from him, and it is mutually severing relations.”

Muslim narrated the hadith of Anas from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Do not envy each other, do not hate each other and do not sever relations with each other. Be, O slaves of Allah, brothers as Allah orders you.” He also narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Ayyūb that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not permitted for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three [days], the two of them meeting and then this one turning away and this one turning away. The best of the two of them is the one who begins with the [greeting of] peace.”[32]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Kharrāsh as-Sulamī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever forsakes his brother for a year, then it is as if he had spilt his blood.”[33]

All of this concerns cutting relations with each other for the sake of worldly affairs. As for in the case where it is for the sake of the *dīn*, then it is permitted to do so for more than three days. Imam Aḥmad stated so, proving it by the story of the three who were left behind [in the expedition to Tabūk] whom the Prophet ﷺ ordered should be shunned because he was afraid that they might be hypocrites, and he [Imam Aḥmad] permitted the shunning of people of strongly confirmed and serious innovation. Al-Khaṭṭābī mentioned that it is permissible for more than three days for a father to shun his child or a husband his wife, and other things of a similar nature, to discipline them because the Prophet ﷺ shunned his wives for a month.

They differ as to whether the act of shunning is terminated by [the greeting of] peace. A party say that it is terminated by that, and that is narrated of al-Ḥasan, and Mālik in a version of Ibn Wahb, and a party of our colleagues [Ḥanbalīs]. Abū Dāwūd

narrated in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not permitted for a *mu’min* to shun a *mu’min* for more than three [days]. If three pass and then he should meet him and greet him with the greeting of peace and if the other returns his greeting of peace, then they share in the reward. If the other does not return his greeting of peace, then he has earned the guilt of wrong action, and the one who [first] greets with the greeting of peace has left his shunning behind him.”[34] However, this is in the case where the other refuses to return the greeting. As for in the case where he does return the greeting and when before their shunning of each other there had been warm friendship between them to which they do not return, then there are some views on that. Aḥmad said, in the narration of al-Athram, when he was asked about the greeting of peace, “Does it terminate the act of shunning?” He answered, “He might greet him and the other might turn away from him, and moreover the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘The two of them meet and this one turns away and this one turns away.’ If he had repeatedly tried to speak to him or to shake his hand....” It is similarly narrated of Mālik that the act of

shunning each other is only terminated by their returning to their warm friendship.

Someone made a distinction between near relatives and non-relatives, saying about non-relatives, “The cessation of the act of shunning is by the simple act of greeting, as distinct from relatives.” He only said this because of the obligatory nature of joining ties of kinship.

His saying ﷺ, “Let none of you sell upon the sale of his brother,” the prohibition against this abundant. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abu Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Let a muslim not offer for sale on top of [another] Muslim’s offering for sale, nor let him propose [marriage] on top of his brother’s proposal.” and in a narration of Muslim there is, “Let a Muslim not bargain over the bargaining of another Muslim, nor let him propose [marriage] on top of his proposal.”[35] They both narrated in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Let a man not sell on top of his brother’s sale, nor propose [marriage] on top of his brother’s proposal unless he grants him permission,” and the wording is Muslim’s.[36]

Muslim narrated in a hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The *mu’min* is the mumin’s brother, and so it is not permissible for a *mu’min* to offer for sale on top of his brother’s sale, nor to propose [marriage] on top of his brother’s proposal, until he desists [from his proposal or sale].”[37]

This shows that this is a Muslim’s duty to another Muslim, but the *kāfir* is not equal to him in that, for indeed a Muslim is permitted to sell on top of a *kāfir’s* sale, and to propose [marriage] on top of his proposal, and that is the position of al-Awzāʿī and Aḥmad, just as the *kāfir’s* right of pre-emption over the Muslim is not established according to him, but, however, many *fuqahā*’ take the position that the prohibition is universal with respect to the rights of Muslims and *kāfirūn*.

They differ as to whether the prohibition is for the purpose of declaring it *ḥarām* or for the purpose of declaring it reprehensible. Some of our colleagues say that it is for the purpose of declaring it reprehensible rather than for the purpose of declaring it *ḥarām*, but the sound position on which the main body of the people of knowledge agree is that it is for the purpose of declaring such behaviour *ḥarām*.

They differ as to whether or not selling on top of one's brother' sale or proposing on top of his proposal are valid [once it has taken place, whether out of ignorance of the prohibition or for some other reason]. Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfiʿī and most of our own people say that it is valid. Mālik said concerning marriage, "If he has not consummated the marriage then they are separated, but if he has consummated the marriage, then they are not separated." Abū Bakr of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] said concerning sale and marriage, "It is invalid in every circumstance," and he narrated that from Aḥmad.

The meaning of a "sale on top of one's brother's sale" is that someone has bought something from him and then one offers one's goods to the purchaser in order for him to buy them and cancel the former purchase. Concerning whether that is particularly to do with his offering [his goods] during the period when the buyer still has a choice about cancelling the deal or whether it is universal, encompassing both the period when the purchaser has that choice and after that moment, there is a disagreement among the people of knowledge which Imam Aḥmad narrated, in the narration of Ḥarb, and he inclined to the position

that it is general and covers both cases, which is the position of a party of our colleagues. Some single out particularly the case if it happens in the period in which the purchaser still has a choice, and that is the obvious meaning of the words of Aḥmad in the narration of Ibn Mashish, and which is clearly stated by ash-Shāfiʿī. However, the former is more obvious because even though the purchaser is not himself able to revoke [the sale] after the expiry of the period in which he has choice, if he desires to return the first goods to their seller he can resort to the means of other ways of returning them to him which necessitate causing him harm, even if only by pressing insistently on him in the matter, and whatever leads to harm to a Muslim is *ḥarām*, and Allah knows best.

In his saying ﷺ, "Be, O slaves of Allah, brothers," the Prophet ﷺ mentioned this as the reason for what he said previously. In that there is an indication that if they give up envying each other, deceiving each other, hating each other, turning the backs on each other, selling on top of each other's sales, then they would be brothers.

In it there is a categorical command to acquire that by which the Muslims will become brothers, and

comprised in that is the discharge of the rights a Muslim has over another Muslim such as greeting him with the greeting of peace, praying for mercy for the one who sneezes [and praises Allah], visiting the sick, accompanying the funeral, accepting invitations, beginning with the greeting of peace when meeting people and being true to people in their absence.

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Give gifts to each other, because gifts do away with the rage and enmity (*waḥar*) of the breast."[38] Others narrated it with the wording, "Give gifts to each other and you will love each other."[39]

There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Give gifts to each other, because gifts remove rancour."[40]

It is narrated of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as a *marfūʿ* hadith that he said, "Shake hands with each other, because it does away with rancour, and give gifts to each other."

Al-Ḥasan said, "Shaking hands causes increase in affection."

Mujāhid said, "It has reached me that when two who love each other see each other, and one of them laughs to the other and they shake hands, their wrong

actions fall off just as the leaves fall from the trees." Someone said to him, "This is a very little act." He said, "You say it is very little but Allah says:

لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

'Even if you had spent everything on the earth, you could not have unified their hearts. But Allah has unified them. He is Almighty, All-Wise.'"[41] [42]

His saying ﷺ, "The Muslim is the brother of a Muslim, he does not wrong him, fail to assist him, lie to him nor despise him," is derived from His saying ﷻ :

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ

"The *mu'minūn* are brothers, so make peace between your brothers."[43] So, since the *mu'minūn* are brothers they are commanded to behave in such a way with each other as will bring about unification of their hearts and their union, and they are forbidden those things which will bring about the dispersal and disagreement of their hearts, and this is derived from that.

Also, a part of a brother's business is to bring what is beneficial to his brother and hold back from him what would harm him. One of the worst harms that one is required to withhold from one's brother Muslim is injustice and wrongdoing, and this is not restricted to a Muslim, but on the contrary it is forbidden with respect to every single person. We have previously spoken in full when we mentioned the hadith qudsi of Abū Dharr, "My slaves, I have forbidden injustice to Myself and have forbidden it between you, so do not wrong each other."

A part of that [which is forbidden] is a Muslim's humiliation of his brother, because the *mu'min* is ordered to help his brother, as he said ﷺ "Help your brother whether he is wrongdoing or wronged." He asked, "Messenger of Allah, I will help him when he is wronged, but how can I help him if he is wrongdoing?" He answered, "Prevent him from doing wrong, because that will be your helping him." Al-Bukhārī narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Anas.[44] Muslim narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Jābir.[45]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī and Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh that the Prophet ﷺ

said, “Any Muslim man who humiliates a Muslim man in a place wherein his respect is violated and his honour reduced, Allah will humiliate him in a place wherein he would love His help. Any man who helps a Muslim in a place in which his honour is reduced and his respect violated, then Allah will help him in a place in which he would love His help.”[46]

Imam Aḥmad narrated in a hadith of Umāmah ibn Sahl from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If in someone’s presence a *mu’min* is humiliated and he doesn’t help him even though he is able to help him, Allah will humiliate him in front of all people on the Day of Rising.”[47]

Al-Bazzār narrated a hadith of ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever helps his brother in his absence while he is able to help him, Allah will help him in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*.”[48]

A part of that is a Muslim lying to his brother. It is not permitted for him to talk to him and lie to him, on the contrary he must only tell him what is true. There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from an-Nawwās ibn Samʿān that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is great treachery that you tell your brother something, he believing you while you are lying to him.”[49]

A part of that is a Muslim's despising his brother Muslim, and this arises from pride, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "Pride is foolish ignorance of the truth and looking down on people." Muslim narrated it in a hadith of Ibn Masʿūd. Imam Aḥmad narrated it, and in one of his versions there is, "Pride is being destitute of understanding the truth and finding fault with people." In another version it is, "... and having contempt for people." In one version there is an extra portion, "...so he does not think that they are anything." Having contempt for people is attacking them, looking down on them. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَى أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءٍ عَسَى أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ

You who have *īmān*! people should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves." (Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 11) The proud person looks at himself as being perfect but sees others as imperfect and so despises and looks down on them, and he doesn't think that they are worthy of him discharging the duties that he owes them, nor that he

should accept the truth from any of them if they should face him with it.

His saying ﷺ, "*Taqwā* is here," indicating his breast three times, is an indication that nobility of character is to Allah by *taqwā*. So it is possible that someone whom people despise because of his weakness and the littleness of his portion of this world, has a greater standing with Allah, exalted is He, than those who have standing and rank in this world, because people only excel each other in *taqwā*, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

"The noblest among you in Allah's sight is the one with the most *taqwā*."[50] The Prophet ﷺ was asked, "Who is the noblest of people?" and he answered, "The one who has the most *taqwā* of Allah ﷻ."[51] There is in another hadith, "Nobility is *taqwā*."[52] The root of *taqwā* is in the heart, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِن تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ

“As for those who honour Allah’s sacred rites, that comes from the *taqwā* in their hearts.”[53] We have previously mentioned this same sense in our discussion of the hadith qudsi of Abū Dharr on His words, “Even if the first and last of you, your human beings and your Jinn were according to the most God-fearing heart of any one man among you, that would not increase anything in My kingdom.”

Since the root of *taqwā* is in the heart then only Allah ﷻ sees its reality, as he ﷺ said, “Allah does not look at your forms or at your property, but He looks at your hearts and your actions.”[54] Thus, many of those who have excellent outer forms, or property or status or leading roles in the world, have hearts which are ruins void of *taqwā*, and it can be that someone has none of that but his heart is filled with *taqwā*, and so he is more honourable to Allah, exalted is He, and indeed that more often happens, just as it is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ḥārithah ibn Wahb that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Shall I not tell you about the people of the Garden? All who are weak whom others regard as weak and of no significance, and who, if they were to swear an oath by Allah, He would fulfil it. Shall I not tell you about the people of the Fire? All

who are coarse, quarrelling, selfishly accumulating, and arrogantly proud."[55]

There is in the *Musnad* from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "As for the people of the Garden, then [they are] all who are weak whom others regard as weak and of no significance, who are dishevelled, and possess [only] two old worn-out garments, and who if they were to swear an oath by Allah, He would fulfil it. As for the people of the Fire: all who are coarse, proud, selfishly accumulating, refusing [others], and who have followings."[56]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Garden and the Fire argued with each other, and the Fire said, 'I have been preferred by [having] the arrogantly proud and the tyrants.' The Garden said, 'Only the weakest of people and those held to be worthless enter me.' Allah said to the Garden, 'You are My mercy, and by you I show mercy to whomever of My slaves I will.' He said to the Fire, 'You are My torment, and I torment by means of you whomever of My slaves I will.'"[57]

Imam Aḥmad narrated it as a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Garden and the Fire fell to boasting competitively. The Fire said, 'Lord, tyrants,

the arrogantly proud, kings and nobles enter me.' The Garden said, 'Lord, the weak, poor and destitute enter me,'"[58] and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that Sahl ibn Saʿd said, "A man passed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. So he said to a man who was sitting with him, 'What do you think of this [man]?' The man, who was one of the important people, said, 'This [man], by Allah! he is such that if he should propose he should be accepted in marriage, and if he intercedes his intercession should be accepted, and if he speaks his words should be heard." He said, "The Prophet ﷺ was silent. Then another man passed, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him [the man sitting with him], 'What do you think of this [man]?' He answered, 'Messenger of Allah, this is a man who is one of the poor Muslims. He is such that if he proposes, he should not be married, if he intercedes his intercession would not be accepted, and if he speaks what he says would not be heard.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'This one is better than the whole earth full of the like of this.'"[59]

Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb al-Qurazī spoke concerning His words, exalted is He:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ

"When the Great Event occurs, none will deny its occurrence; bringing low, raising high."[60] He said, "It brings low men who in the world were raised high, and it raises high men who in the world were brought low."

His saying ﷺ, "It is sufficient evil for a man that he should despise his brother Muslim," means that it suffices him[61] for evil that he despises his brother Muslim, because he only despises his brother Muslim because of arrogantly regarding himself as greater than him, and arrogant pride is one of the worst qualities of evil. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "No one will enter the Garden in whose heart is the weight of a mote of pride."

There is also in it from him that he said, "Might is His lower garment and pride is His outer garment, so, 'Whoever vies with Me, I will punish him.'"[62] His vying with Allah for His attributes which are not appropriate for creatures is sufficient evil.

There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān from Faḍālah ibn ʿUbayd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are three which are not to be asked about: a man who vies with

Allah for His lower garment, a man who vies with Allah for His outer garment – because His outer garment is His pride, and His lower garment is His might – and a man who is in doubt concerning Allah and in despair of the mercy of Allah."[63]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever says, 'People have perished,' then he is the most destroyed of them."[64] Mālik said, "If he says that grieving at what he sees among people, meaning in their *dīn*, then I do not see any harm in it. If he says it while conceited about himself, diminishing the worth of people, then it is a highly disliked matter which is forbidden." Abū Dāwūd mentioned it in his Sunan.

His saying ﷺ, "All of a Muslim is sacred for a Muslim, his life, his property and his honour." This is one of the matters about which the Prophet ﷺ used to deliver in *khuṭbahs* in the largest gatherings, because he delivered an address concerning it during the Farewell Ḥajj on the Day of Sacrifice, the Day of ʿArafah and the second of the Days of *Tashrīq*, and he said, "Your lives [literally: bloods], your properties, your honour are sacred to you just as the sanctity of this day of yours in this month of yours in this land of

yours."[65] In the narration of al-Bukhārī and others there is, "Your skins."

In a version there is, "And he said it again repeatedly," and then raised his head and said, "O Allah, have I conveyed? O Allah, have I conveyed?"[66]

In a version there is, "Certainly, those of you who are present must convey it to those who are absent."

In a version of al-Bukhārī there is, "Because Allah has made your lives, your property and your honour sacred to you, except because of their due."

There is in a version, "Your lives, your property and your honour are sacred to you, like this day and this land until the Day of Rising, even to the extent that a push with which a Muslim pushes a Muslim, meaning by it some evil, is *ḥarām*."[67]

In a version there is that he said, "The *mu'min* is sacred to the *mu'min* just as the sanctity of this day. He is forbidden to eat his flesh and backbite him when he is absent. He is forbidden to violate His honour, and he is forbidden to slap his face. He is forbidden to spill his blood. He is forbidden to push him with such a push as causes him suffering."[68]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd from some of the Companions that they used to travel with the

Prophet ﷺ and one of the men fell asleep, so another went towards a rope he had with him and took it and he [the sleeper awoke and] became afraid. The Prophet ﷺ said, "It is not *ḥalāl* for a Muslim to frighten a Muslim."[69]

Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated from as-Sā'ib ibn Yazīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let none of you seize his brother's staff playfully in earnest. Whoever seizes his brother's staff, must return it to him."[70] Abū ʿUbayd said, "It means if he takes his goods without meaning to steal them but intending to enrage him. So he is playing in his pretending to steal, earnest in his causing discomfort and fear to the other."

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If you are three, then two should not hold a confidential conversation without the third, because that would distress him." The wording is that of Muslim.[71]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let not two hold a confidential conversation excluding a third person because that hurts the *mu'min*, and Allah abhors causing hurt to a *mu'min*."[72]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not hurt the slaves of Allah, do not upbraid them, do not seek out their hidden faults, because if someone seeks out the hidden faults of his brother Muslim, Allah will seek out his hidden faults until He even disgraces him in his house.”[73]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about backbiting and he answered, “[It is] your mentioning your brother with that which he dislikes.” He asked, “What do you think if there is in him that which I say?” He answered, “If there is in him that which you say then that is backbiting. If there is not in him that which you say then you have slandered him.”[74]

All of these texts consist of [the fact that] it is not *ḥalāl* to bring hurt to him in any way whatsoever whether in word or deed without due right, because Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

“And those who abuse[75] men and women who are *mu’minūn*, when they have not merited it, bear the weight of slander and clear wrongdoing.”[76]

Allah only makes the *mu'minūn* brothers so that they can show kindness and mercy to each other. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The likeness of the *mu'minūn* in their mutual affection, sympathy and compassion is like the body which when any of its members suffers from a complaint the rest of the body rallies round with fever and sleeplessness."

There is in a version of Muslim, "The *mu'minūn* are like a single man; if his head has a complaint the rest of his body rallies round with fever and sleeplessness."

Also in a version of his, "The Muslims are like a single man; if his eye has a complaint, then all of him complains. If his head has a complaint then all of him complains."[77]

There is in both of them from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* with respect to the [other] *mu'min* is like a building parts of which strengthen others."[78]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *mu'min* is the *mu'min's* mirror. The *mu'min* is the *mu'min's* brother. He refrains from causing him to perish, and he guards him from behind [or in his absence]."[79] At-Tirmidhī narrated it

and his wording is, “Each of you is his brother’s mirror. If he sees any harm in him, then he should uncover it for him.”[80]

A man said to ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, “Regard the elder one of the Muslims as a father, and the younger one as a son, and those in between as brothers, then which of those would you like to behave badly towards?” A part of what Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh ar-Rāzī said was, “Let the portion the *mu’min* has from you be threefold: if you do not benefit him then do not harm him; if you do not cause him to rejoice, then do not cause him distress; if you do not praise him then do not blame him.”

1 This is when a person bids against another’s bid for the sake of raising the price with no intention of buying. Ed.

2 At-Tirmidhī (1927)

3 Abū Dāwūd (4882)

4 Al-Bukhārī (6064-6), Muslim (2563)

5 Aḥmad (3:491)

6 Al-Bukhārī (2442), Muslim (2559)

7 Aḥmad (2:277)

8 Al-Bukhārī (6076), Muslim (2559)

9 Ibn Mājah (3849), Aḥmad (1:3)

10 *Ḥirṣ* can mean fervent desire, eagerness, greed and covetousness. It is inconceivable that it have a bad meaning when applied to a prophet, and thus we have chosen “fervent desire”.

11 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 109

12 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 54

13 At-Tirmidhī (2510), Aḥmad (1:165)

14 Abū Dāwūd (4903)

15 Two synonyms meaning “exulting in wealth conceitedly and boastfully without showing gratitude for it”. Trans.

16 Al-Ḥākim (4:168)

17 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 79

18 Al-Bukhārī (5065, 7569), Muslim (815)

19 Al-Bukhārī (2142), Muslim (1516)

20 *Nājish*: properly a beater who drives hunted animals or birds towards the hunter. Trans.

21 Sūrah Fāṭir: 43

22 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (10234) and Ibn Ḥibbān authenticated it (5559), i.e. declared it *ṣaḥīḥ*

23 Al-Bukhārī (3030), Muslim (1739)

24 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 91

25 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 103

26 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 62-63

27 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 114

28 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 9

29 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 1

30 Abū Dāwūd (4919), at-Tirmidhī (2509) and Aḥmad (6:444)

31 Aḥmad (6:459)

32 Al-Bukhārī (6077, 6237), Muslim (2560)

33 Abū Dāwūd (4915)

34 Abū Dāwūd (4914)

35 Al-Bukhārī (2140), Muslim (1414)

36 Al-Bukhārī (5142), Muslim (1412)

37 Muslim (1414)

38 At-Tirmidhī (2130)

39 Al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (594) and al-Bayhaqī (6:169)

40 Al-Bazzār (1937)

41 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 63

42 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*

43 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 10

44 Al-Bukhārī (2443-4)

45 Muslim (2584)

46 Abū Dāwūd (4884)

47 Aḥmad (3:487)

48 Al-Bazzār (3315)

49 Aḥmad (4:183)

50 Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt: 13

51 Al-Bukhārī (2353) and Muslim (2378)

52 At-Tirmidhī (3271), Ibn Mājah (4219)

53 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 32

54 Muslim (2564) and others

55 Al-Bukhārī (4918), Muslim (2853)

56 Aḥmad (3:145)

57 Al-Bukhārī (4850), Muslim (2846)

58 Aḥmad (3:13)

59 Al-Bukhārī (5091)

60 Sūrat al-Wāqiʿah: 1-3

61 The hadith has *bi ḥasb* and the explanation has *yakfī* which are two synonymous ways of speech. Trans.

62 Muslim (2620)

63 *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān (4559)

64 Muslim (2623)

65 Al-Bukhārī (1739, 1741), Muslim (1679) and others

66 This is in al-Bukhārī's narration from Ibn ʿAbbās

67 Al-Bazzār (1143)

68 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (19:176)

69 Abū Dāwūd (5004)

70 Abū Dāwūd (5003), at-Tirmidhī (2160), and Aḥmad (4:221)

71 Al-Bukhārī (6290), Muslim (2184)

72 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (2007)

73 Aḥmad (5:279)

74 Muslim (2579)

75 In the sense of causing harm. Trans.

76 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 58

77 Al-Bukhārī (6011), Muslim (2586)

78 Al-Bukhārī (481), Muslim (2585)

79 Abū Dāwūd (4918)

80 At-Tirmidhī (1929)

الحديث السادس والثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ الدُّنْيَا؛ نَفَّسَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ؛ يَسَّرَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا؛ سَتَرَهُ اللهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ، وَاللهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ، وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا؛ سَهَّلَ اللهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَا جَلَسَ قَوْمٌ فِي بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوتِ اللهِ؛ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللهِ، وَيَتَدَارَسُونَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ؛ إِلاَّ نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ، وَغَشِيَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ، وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلاَئِكَةُ، وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللهُ فِيمَنْ عِنْدَهُ، وَمَنْ بَطَّأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ؛ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ.

Easing Someone's Distress

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever eases a distress of the world for a *mu'min*, Allah will ease one of the distresses of the Day of Rising for him. Whoever makes it easy for someone in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in the world and the Next Life. Whoever conceals [the wrong action of] a Muslim, Allah will conceal his [wrong action] in the world and the Next

Life. Allah is ready to help the slave as long as the slave is ready to help his brother. Whoever travels on a path seeking in it knowledge, Allah will smooth for him by it a path to the Garden. If people gather in one of the houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah, studying it together and teaching it to each other, tranquillity will descend upon them, mercy will cover them, the angels encircle them, and Allah remembers them among those who are with Him. Whoever's deeds hold him back will not be advanced by his lineage." Muslim narrated it (2699).

Muslim narrated it in the version of al-Aʿmash from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Abū Hurayrah. More than a few of the memorisers of hadith objected to his narration of it, for example Abū'l-Faḍl al-Harawī and ad-Dāraquṭnī, because al-Asbāṭ ibn Muḥammad narrated it from al-Aʿmash who said, "I was told it from Abū Ṣāliḥ," and so it becomes clear that al-Aʿmash did not hear it directly from Abū Ṣāliḥ and he did not mention who narrated it to him from him. At-Tirmidhī and others gave more weight to this version. Some of the companions of al-Aʿmash added in the text of the hadith, "Whoever forgives a Muslim, then Allah will forgive him his slips on the Day of Rising."[1]

The two of them narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Muslim is the Muslim’s brother; he does not wrong him, nor surrender him. Whoever is ready to help his brother in need, then Allah is ready to help him in his need. Whoever relieves the distress of a Muslim, then Allah will relieve him of one of his anxieties on the Day of Rising. Whoever veils [the fault of] a Muslim, then Allah will veil him on the Day of Rising.”[2]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated in a hadith of Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever eases a distress of the world for a believer, Allah will ease a distress of the Day of Rising for him. Whoever veils for a *mu’min* his hidden defects, Allah will veil his defects. Whoever delivers a *mu’min* from distress, then Allah will deliver him from his distress.”[3]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Maslamah ibn Mukhallad that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever veils [the fault or wrong action of] a Muslim in the world, then Allah will veil him in the world and the *ākhirah*. Whoever rescues someone who is in anxiety, then Allah will set him free from one of the anxieties of the Day of Rising. Whoever is ready to help his brother in need, then Allah is ready to help him in his need.”[4]

His saying ﷺ, “Whoever eases a distress of the world for a *mu’min*, Allah will ease a distress of the Day of Rising for him.” This refers to the recompense [being] in a similar form to the action, and there are many textual sources in this same sense, such as in his saying ﷺ, “Allah only shows mercy to those of His slaves who are merciful,”[5] and his saying, “Allah will torment those who torment people in the world.”[6]

A distress (*kurbah*) is a tremendously severe thing that pitches the person who experiences it into anxiety, and to ease it (*naffasa*) is to make it lighter for him, and it is derived from relaxing and removing a strangling cord as if one slackened a strangling cord so that the person could take a breath. Deliverance (*tafrīj*) is more tremendous than that, which is that one removes the distress so that his anxiety is distress, and his worry and unhappiness disappear. So the reward for easing is ease, and the reward for deliverance is deliverance, as in the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, and the two are united in the hadith of Kaʿb ibn ʿUjrah.

At-Tirmidhī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, “If a *mu’min* feeds a *mu’min* in hunger, Allah will feed him on the Day of Rising from the fruits of the Garden. If a *mu’min* gives drink to a *mu’min* in

thirst, Allah will give him to drink on the Day of Rising from the choicest sealed wine.[7] If a *mu'min* clothes a *mu'min* who is naked, Allah will clothe him with the green garments of the Garden.[8]"[9] Imam Aḥmad narrated it with some doubt as to whether it was attributed to the Prophet ﷺ. Some say that the sound position is that it is a *mawqūf* statement.

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, "People will be gathered on the Day of Rising more naked than they have ever been, hungrier than they have ever been, thirstier than they have ever been, more exhausted than they have ever been. So whoever clothes for the sake of Allah ﷻ Allah will clothe him. Whoever feeds for the sake of Allah ﷻ Allah will feed him. Whoever gives drink for the sake of Allah ﷻ Allah will give him drink. Whoever pardons for the sake of Allah ﷻ Allah will pardon him."

Al-Bayhaqī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas that, "A man of the people of the Garden will be made to overlook the people of the Fire on the Day of Rising. One of the people of the Fire will call out to him, 'So-and-so, do you recognise me?' He will answer, "No, by Allah! I do not recognise you. Who are you?' He will

answer, ‘I am the one whom you passed by in the abode of the world and you asked me to give you a drink of water, and I gave it to you to drink.’ He will say, ‘Now I recognise you.’ He will say, ‘Intercede for me because of it with your Lord.’” He said, “So he will ask Allah ﷻ and he will say, ‘Make me an intercessor for him,’ and so He will command and bring him out of the Fire.”[10]

His saying, “One of the distresses of the Day of Rising,” but he did not say, “...of the distresses of the world and the *ākhirah*,” as he said with respect to ‘easing’ and ‘veiling’. Someone said with respect to that, “Distresses are tremendously severe matters, and that does not happen to everyone in the world, in contrast to difficulties and to the hidden faults and wrongs that need veiling, because hardly anyone is able to be without that in the world even if only experiencing difficulties in some important necessities.” Some say, “It is because worldly anxieties in comparison with the anxieties of the *ākhirah* are as if nothing, so Allah stores up the recompense for easing [someone else’s] anxieties with Him so that He can ease the anxieties of the *ākhirah* with it.” Something that shows that is the saying of the Prophet

ﷺ “Allah will bring together the first and the last on one plane, so that the crier can hear them and sight will take them all in. The sun will draw near to them, and people will have so much misery and anxiety as they will not be able to bear or support. People will say to each other, ‘Do you not see what has come to you? Should you not look to see who will intercede for you with your Lord?’” And he mentioned the rest of the hadith of intercession. They both (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) narrated it in the same sense from Abū Hurayrah.[11]

They also related a hadith of ʿĀ’ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “You will be gathered barefoot, naked and uncircumcised.” She said, “I asked, ‘Men and women, looking at each other?’ He answered, ‘The matter is more serious than that that should worry them.’”[12]

They both narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ spoke concerning His saying:

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“The Day mankind will stand before the Lord of all the worlds,”[13] He said, “One of them will stand in

sweat up to the middle of his ears."[14]

They both narrated the hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "People will sweat on the Day of Rising so much that their sweat will go into the earth to the depth of seventy cubits [a cubit is the distance between the fingertips and the elbow], and it will bridle them so much that it will reach their ears," and its wording is from al-Bukhārī. The wording of Muslim is, "The sweat will go into the earth to the depth of seventy fathoms [a fathom is the distance between both sets of fingertips when the arms are fully extended], and it will reach up to people's mouths," or "to their ears."[15]

Muslim narrated the hadith of al-Miqdād that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The sun will draw near to the slaves so much so that it will be the distance of a mile or two miles, and the sun will affect them so much that they will be in sweat to the extent of their actions. Some will have it up to their heels, some will have it up to the knees, some will have it up to the two flanks, and it will bridle some of them completely [reaching up to around the face]."[16]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "The earth, all of it, will be fire on the Day of Rising; and the Garden, behind it you will

see its goblets and its nubile maidens. A man will sweat so much that his sweat will run into the earth to the extent of a man's height. Then it will rise until it reaches his nose, and yet the reckoning will not even have begun for him." He asked, "What is the reason for that, Abū ʿAbdullāh?" He answered, "Because of what people think will be done to them."

Abū Mūsā said, "The sun will be over people's heads on the Day of Rising, and their actions will either shade them or expose them."

There is in the *Musnad* a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir, "Every man is in the shade of his *ṣadaqah* until people are separated out."[17]

His saying ﷺ, "Whoever makes it easy for someone in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in the world and the Next Life," also shows that hardship can also happen in the Next Life, and Allah describes the Day of Rising as being a 'hard day' and that it will not be easy for the kafirun. So that shows that it is easy for people other than the *kāfirūn*. He says:

وَكَانَ يَوْماً عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيراً

"It will be a hard Day for the *kāfirūn*."[18]

Making things easier for someone who is hard pressed in the world with respect to property and money may be through one of two means: either by allowing him time [to repay a debt] until things are easier for him, and that is obligatory, as Allah says, exalted is He:

وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَى مَيْسَرَةٍ

"If someone is in difficult circumstances, there should be a deferral until things are easier,"[19] and sometimes it may be by forgoing repayment if he is in debt, and if not then by giving him exactly so much as will remove his hardship. Both of these have tremendous merit.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There was a carpenter whoused to deal with people allowingthem credit. Ifhe saw someone [with whom he dealt] in hardship, he would say to his children, 'Overlook [his debt] so that perhaps Allah might overlook [our wrong actions and shortcomings],' and so Allah overlooked [his wrong actions]."[20]

There is in the two of them from Ḥudhayfah and Abū Masʿūd al-Anṣārī that they both heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “A man died and so it was said to him, ‘For what reason should Allah forgive you?’ He answered, ‘I used to trade with people and I would go easy on those who were moderately affluent and make things lighter on those in difficulty,’ and in a version there is that he said, ‘I would grant more time to those in difficulty, and I would accept minted coins [without examining their quality],’ or he said, ‘...cash,’ and so he was forgiven.” Muslim narrated it in a hadith of Abū Masʿūd from the Prophet ﷺ and in his hadith there is, “Allah said, ‘We have more right to that than he; pass over [his wrong actions]!”[21]

He also narrated the hadith of Abū Qatādah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever would be pleased that Allah should rescue him from the distresses of the Day of Rising, then let him grant some ease to someone in difficulty or forego [repayment] from him.”[22]

He also narrated the hadith of Abū’l-Yasar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever grants more time to a person in difficulty or foregoes repayment, Allah will shade him in His shade on a Day on which there is no shade but His.”[23]

There is in the *Musnad* from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever wishes that his supplication should be answered and his distresses removed, then let him deliver the person in difficulty [from his distress].”[24]

His saying ﷺ, “Whoever conceals [the wrong action of] a Muslim, Allah will conceal his [wrong action] in the world and the Next Life.” This is one of those matters on which there are many texts in the same sense. Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever conceals the vulnerability of his brother Muslim, then Allah will conceal his vulnerability on the Day of Rising. Whoever exposes the vulnerability of his brother Muslim, then Allah will expose his vulnerability to the extent that He will bring disgrace upon him in his own house.”[25]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir that he heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “Whoever veils a *mu’min* in the world because of a vulnerability, then Allah ﷻ will veil him on the Day of Rising.”[26]

It has been narrated from one of the right-acting first generations that he said, “I came upon a people who had no defects and who mentioned people’s

defects, and so people mentioned their defects. I came upon peoples who had defects and who withheld themselves from [mentioning] other's defects, and so their defects were forgotten," or however it was that he said it.

What testifies to this is the hadith of Abū Barzah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Assembly of those who profess *īmān* with their tongues but in whose hearts *īmān* has not yet entered, do not backbite Muslims, and do not seek out their hidden faults and vulnerabilities, because whoever seeks out their hidden faults, then Allah will seek out his hidden faults. Whoever's hidden faults Allah seeks out, He will disgrace him in his house."[27] Imam Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd narrated it, and at-Tirmidhī narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar.[28]

Know that there are two types of people:

First, those whose [wrong actions] are veiled and nothing is known of their acts of disobedience; if there occurs a lapse or a slip on his part, it is not permissible to disclose it nor to violate [the veil concealing it] nor to talk about it because that is *ḥarām* backbiting, and it is this about which the texts are narrated. Concerning that, Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

"People who love to see filth being spread about concerning those who have *īmān* will have a painful punishment both in the dunyā and the *ākhirah*."[29] What is meant here is to spread filth for the *mu'min* whose [wrong action] is veiled concerning that which he does or is suspected of while he is in fact innocent of it, as in the case of the story of the *ifk* [the slander of ʿĀ'ishah ﵂]. One of the right-acting wazirs said to someone whom he was admonishing, "Exert yourself so that the [wrong actions of] disobedient people should be veiled, because making public their acts of disobedience is a defect in the people of Islam. The best of matters is to veil defects. If the like of this person came to us penitently and full of regret and affirmed that he was due a hadd punishment but did not clarify [what it was] then he would not be asked to clarify that, but on the contrary he would be told to return and veil himself, just as the Prophet ﷺ ordered Māʿiz and the woman from Ghamid, and just as the one who said, 'I have done something worthy of the hadd punishment so apply it to me,' was not asked to clarify what he had done." If someone like this is

apprehended during his crime, and it has not yet reached the ruler, then one must plead for him so that it does not reach the ruler. With respect to situations like this there is narrated a hadith of the Prophet ﷺ "Forgive the people of good qualities their slips." Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā'ī narrated it in a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah.[30]

Second, there is someone who is well-known for acts of disobedience and who does them openly not caring which of them he does or what is said about him for doing them. This is the openly wicked person, and it is not backbiting [to talk about him] as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and others stated. There is no harm in investigating the affairs of someone like this in order to apply the hadd punishment to him. Some of our colleagues declared that, seeking openly to prove it by the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "Unays, go to this one's woman, and if she confesses, then stone her."[31] For someone like this, one must not plead when they are taken, even if it has not reached the ruler, but on the contrary he is left so that the hadd punishment can be applied to him and so that his evil may stop and people like him may exercise restraint. Mālik said, "Someone of whom it is not previously known that he

hurts or harms people, but that it was a slip on his part, then there is no harm in pleading for him as long as it has not reached the ruler. As for someone who is well known for wrong and corrupt behaviour, then I do not like anyone to plead for him, but on the contrary he should be left so that the hadd punishment can be applied to him." Ibn al-Mundhir and others narrated it.

Imam Aḥmad disapproved of taking deviant people before the ruler in any case, but he only disapproved of it because, in the main, they do not apply the *ḥadd* punishments in the way they should. For this reason he said, "If you know that he will execute the *ḥadd* punishments then send him [to the ruler]," then he mentioned that they had beaten a man who had subsequently died, meaning that killing him was not permissible [since the *ḥadd* punishment in his case was not a capital one].

If anyone of the first type turns penitently [from his wrong action], then it is best that he should turn in *tawbah* [and keep it] between himself and Allah, exalted is He, and conceal his self's [wrong action].

As for the second type, some say that it is the same, but some say that on the contrary it is better for him

to go to the ruler and confirm that he himself has done something requiring the hadd punishment so that it can purify him.

His saying, “Allah is ready to help the slave as long as the slave is ready to help his brother. “There is in the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, “Whoever is ready to help his brother in his need, then Allah is ready to help him in his need.” We have seen previously in the explanation of the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth hadith the merit of discharging someone else’s needs and exerting oneself to do so. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿUmar, “The best of actions is bringing happiness to a *mu’min*, [such as] you clothe his nakedness, feed him in hunger or discharge his need.”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī sent some people of his company to look after the needs of a man, and he said to them, “Go to Thābit al-Bunānī and take him with you.” They went to Thābit and he said, “I am in *iʿtikāf* retreat.” So they went to al-Ḥasan and told him, and he said, “Say to him, ‘Bleary-eyed! do you not know that your walking for the sake of your brother Muslim’s need is better for you than Ḥajj after Ḥajj?’” They returned to Thābit and he abandoned his *iʿtikāf* and went with them.

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith from a daughter of Khabbāb ibn al-Arat that she said, “Khabbāb went out on a raid, and the Prophet ﷺ came repeatedly to us to milk a female goat of ours in a large bowl of ours. It would fill up so much that it would overflow. When Khabbāb came, he milked it and its milk returned to the condition it was in.”[32]

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq used to milk the sheep and goats of the people of the quarter, and then when he was appointed *khalīfah* one of their servant girls said, “Now he will not milk them.” Abū Bakr said, “On the contrary, I hope that which I have embarked on will not divert me from anything that I used to do,” or however it was that he said it.

They only undertook the milking because Arab women did not normally do it and they used to disapprove of it, and so when the men were away the women needed someone to milk for them. It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not give me to drink from a woman’s milking.”[33]

ʿUmar went regularly to some widows and he would draw water for them at night. One night Ṭalḥah saw him entering a woman’s house, and so Ṭalḥah went to see her during the day and found her to be an

old crippled blind woman. He asked her, “What does this man do for you?” She said, “This man, since such and such a time has come to me regularly to do things for me, and remove things that trouble me.” Ṭalḥah said, “May your mother be bereft of you, Ṭalḥah! You follow up the slips of ʿUmar.”

Abū Wā’il used to go around the women of the quarter and the very old women every day, and buy their necessities for them and do things of use to them.

Mujāhid said, “I accompanied Ibn ʿUmar on a journey in order to serve him, but he served me.”

Many right-acting people [*ṣāliḥūn*] have stipulated to their companions on journeys that they [the *ṣāliḥūn*] should serve them.

A man accompanied some people on *jihād* and stipulated that he should serve them. When any of them wanted to wash his head or his clothing, he would say, “This is one of my preconditions,” and he would do it. Then he died and they stripped him to wash him [*ghusl*]. They saw written on his hand, “One of the people of the Garden.” They then looked further and saw that it was written between the skin and the flesh [beneath].

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Anas that he said, “We were with the Prophet ﷺ on a journey and some of us were fasting and some were not fasting.” He said, “We alighted at place on an extremely hot day. Those who had the greatest shade were those who had large outer garments. Some people protected themselves from the sun with their hands.” He said, “Those fasting collapsed. Those who were not fasting arose and pitched tents, and got water for the mounts. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Those who were not fasting have gone off with the reward today.’”[34]

It is narrated from a man of Aslam that the Prophet ﷺ was brought food on one of his journeys and so all his Companions ate from it. The man from Aslam withheld his hand, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, “What is wrong with you?” He answered, “I am fasting.” He asked, “What made you do that?” He said, “My two sons are with me and they saddle [my mount] for me and serve me.” So he said, “Then they continue to have more merit than you.”

There is in the *Marāsīl* of Abū Dāwūd (Mursal Hadith of Abū Dāwūd) from Abū Qilābah that some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived praising one of their people highly. They said, “We

have never seen the like of so-and-so. Whenever we travelled he was reciting, and whenever we alighted he performed *ṣalāh*." He asked, "So who looked after his property..." until he mentioned, "...and who gave fodder to his camel or his riding beast?" They answered, "We did." He said, "Then all of you are better than him."[35]

His saying ﷺ, "Whoever travels on a path seeking knowledge in it, Allah will by it smooth for him a path to the Garden." This same sense is also narrated by Abū'd-Dardā' from the Prophet ﷺ. Travelling on a path and seeking knowledge comprises travelling literally on a path, i.e. walking on one's feet to the assemblies of people of knowledge and it comprises travelling a metaphorical paths which will bring one to knowledge, such as memorising it, studying it, being involved in discussion of it, overviewing it, writing and recording it, coming to understand it, and similarly all the paths of meaning by which knowledge is obtained.

His saying, "Allah will smooth for him a path by it to the Garden," may mean that Allah will make easy for him the knowledge which he is seeking and travelling on its path because knowledge is a path

which leads to the Garden. This is like in His words, exalted is He:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

"We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember. But is there any rememberer there?"[36] One of the right-acting first generations said, "Is there any seeker of knowledge to be helped in it?"

It may also mean that Allah makes easy for the seeker of knowledge, if he intends the face of Allah by seeking knowledge, that he benefit by it and that he act according to its requirements, so that then it becomes the cause of his guidance and his entrance into the Garden.

Allah may make other sciences easy for the seeker of knowledge by which he gains benefit and which help him to reach the Garden, as is said, "Whoever acts according to what he knows, Allah will cause him to inherit knowledge which he didn't know," and as is said, "The reward of a good action is a good action after it." His words, exalted is He, show that:

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ

"He increases in guidance those who are already guided and gives them their *taqwā*."[37]

There may also be comprised in that the facilitation of the sensory path to the Garden on the Day of Rising, and that is the *Ṣirāṭ* [the bridge over the Fire to the Garden] and those terrors preceding and succeeding it, and so he facilitates it to the seeker of knowledge so that he might benefit by it, because knowledge shows the way to Allah by the nearest paths to Him. Whoever travels on its path, and does not deviate and wander from it, reaches Allah and the Garden by the nearest and easiest paths, so that the paths which lead to the Garden are all made easy for him in the world and the next life. There is no path to gnosis [*maʿrifah*] of Allah and to the attainment of His good pleasure, and to the victorious achievement of His closeness and to His proximity in the *ākhirah* but through the useful knowledge with which Allah sent His Messengers, and with which He revealed His Books, because it shows [the way] to Him, and by it one is guided in the darknesses of ignorance, ambiguities and doubts. For this reason Allah names His Book a 'light', because by it one is guided in the dark. Allah, exalted is He, says:

قَدْ جَاءَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنِ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

"A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book. By it, Allah guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of Peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path."[38]

The Prophet ﷺ likened the bearers of the knowledge with which he had come to the stars by which one is guided in the dark. There is in the *Musnad* from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The likeness of the people of knowledge in the land is like that of the stars in the sky by which one is guided in the darkness on land and on sea. Then when the stars are effaced it is very likely that guides will go astray."[39]

As long as knowledge remains on the earth people will be guided. The remaining of knowledge is the existence of those who bear it. When those who bear it and undertake to act by it disappear, then people fall into error, as it is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah does not withdraw knowledge by wresting it from the

breasts of men, but he withdraws it by withdrawing the people of knowledge. When there no longer remains a single person of knowledge people take ignorant people as leaders, who are asked and so give judgement without knowledge, who go astray and lead others astray."[40]

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned a day when knowledge would be removed, so someone asked him, "How can knowledge go when we recite the Qur'ān and teach its recitation to our women and our children?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "There is the Tawrāh and the Injīl with the Jews and the Christians, so what good did it do them?" ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit was asked about this hadith and he said, "If you wish, I will tell you the first knowledge to be removed from people: humble submissiveness (*khushūʿ*)." ʿUbādah only said this because there are two categories of knowledge:

First, that whose fruits are in a person's heart, which is the knowledge of Allah, exalted is He, and of His names, attributes and actions which necessarily require that one fear Him, have awe of Him, magnify Him and submit to Him, love Him, hope for from Him, supplicate Him, and rely upon Him, and so on. This is the useful knowledge. As Ibn Masʿūd said, "Some

people recite the Qur'ān and it does not pass their throats. However, if it falls upon the heart and becomes firmly established there, it benefits."

Al-Ḥasan said, "There are two types of knowledge: knowledge on the tongue, and that is the proof of Allah against the son of Ādam, and knowledge in the heart, and that is useful knowledge."

The second category is the knowledge that is on the tongue and it is the proof of Allah as is said in the hadith, "The Qur'ān is a proof for you or against you." The first knowledge to be removed is useful knowledge, which is inward knowledge which mixes with the heart and puts it right. Then there remains spoken knowledge as a proof, but which people treat lightly and with contempt not acting according to its requirements, neither those who bear it nor others. Then this knowledge will go with the departure of those who bear it, and nothing will remain but the written copies of the Qur'ān, and then there will be no one who knows its meanings, its limits, and its rulings. Then things will continue and at the end of time absolutely nothing will remain in the written copies nor in the hearts. After that the Hour will come, as he said ﷺ, "The Hour will not rise except over the worst

of people,"[41] and he said, "The Hour will not arise while there is a single person who says, 'Allah, Allah.'"[42]

His saying ﷺ, "A people do not sit in one of the houses of Allah reciting the Book of Allah and studying it together but that tranquillity will descend on them, mercy will cover them, the angels encircle them and Allah will mention them among those who are with Him." This shows that it is highly desirable to sit in the mosques reciting the Qur'ān and studying it together. If it is interpreted to mean learning the Qur'ān and teaching it, then there is no disagreement as to its being highly desirable. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there is from ʿUthmān that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The best of you are those who learn the Qur'ān and teach it."[43] Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī said, "This is what has made me sit in this place," because he had taught the Qur'ān at the time of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān until he reached [the time of] al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf.

If it is interpreted in a more general sense than that, then it comprises gathering in mosques for the study of the Qur'ān without any qualification. The Prophet ﷺ used sometimes to order someone to recite Qur'ān so that he could listen to it, as he ordered Ibn

Masʿūd to recite to him. Then he said, “I love to hear it from someone other than me.”[44] ʿUmar used to order someone to recite to him and his companions and they would listen. Sometimes he told Abū Mūsā and sometimes he told ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir.

Ibn ʿAbbās was asked, “Which action is best?” He answered, “*Dhikr* of Allah. If any people sit in one of the houses of Allah, reciting to each other the Book of Allah and studying it together then the angels will shade them with their wings, and they will be the guests of Allah as long as they do that until they turn to some other talk.” It is also narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith but the *mawqūf* statement is more sound.

Yazīd ar-Raqāshī narrated from Anas that he said, “It used to be that when they prayed the morning prayer, they would sit in circles reciting the Qur’ān and learning the obligations and the sunnahs, and doing *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ.”

ʿAṭiyyah narrated from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If any people pray the morning prayer and then sit in the place where they prayed reciting the Book of Allah to each other and studying it together, Allah will entrust them to angels who will seek forgiveness for them until they plunge into some

other talk." This shows that it is highly desirable to gather after the morning prayer to study the Qur'ān, but there is some weakness in ʿAṭiyyah.

Ḥarb al-Kirmānī narrated with his chain of transmission from al-Awzāʿī that he was asked about study after the morning prayer and he said, "Ḥassān ibn ʿAṭiyyah informed me that the first person to introduce it in the mosque of Damascus was Hishām ibn Ismāʿīl al-Makhzumi during the khalifate of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, and that the people took hold of it. And there is with his chain of transmission from Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Ibrāhīm ibn Sulaymān that they both used to study the Qur'ān after the morning prayer in Beirut while al-Awzāʿī was in the mosque and that he didn't try to change their behaviour.

Ḥarb mentioned that he saw the people of Damascus, Homs, Makkah and Baṣra gathering for recitation after the morning prayer. All of the people of Shām used to recite the Qur'ān together with a single sūrah and with loud voices, but the people of Makkah and Baṣra would gather and each would recite ten *āyāt* while the others were silent [listening], and then another would recite ten *āyāt* until they had finished. Ḥarb said, "All of that is good and beautiful."

Mālik rejected that behaviour of the people of Shām. Zayd ibn ʿUbayd ad-Dimashqī said, “Mālik ibn Anas said to me, ‘It has reached me that you sit in circles reciting.’ So I told him what our colleagues used to do. Mālik said, ‘The Emigrants and the Anṣār were with us and we didn’t know this.’” He [Zayd] said, “I said, ‘This is strange.’ He [Mālik] said, ‘It is strange that a man recites and people gather around him,’ and he said, ‘This is not our view.’”

Abū Muṣʿab and Isḥāq ibn Muḥammad al-Farawī said, “We heard Mālik ibn Anas saying, ‘Gathering in the morning after the morning prayer to recite the Qur’ān is an innovation. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the people of knowledge after them did not use to do this. When they prayed they would each sit alone by himself and recite [the Qur’ān] and remember Allah ﷻ with *dhikr*, and then later they would go without talking to each other because they were occupied with *dhikr* of Allah. So all of this is newly introduced.”

Ibn Wahb said, “I heard Mālik saying, ‘Reciting in the mosque was not a part of the old practice of people. The first person to introduce that in the mosque wasal-Ḥajjājibn Yūsuf.’ Mālik said, ‘I

disapprove of that recitation in the mosque from a written copy [of the Qur'ān].'" Abū Bakr an-Naysabūrī narrated all of this in the book *Manāqib Mālik* (he Memorable Qualities of Mālik ﷺ).

The majority seek to prove that it is desirable to gather to study the Qur'ān all at one time by the hadith which show that it is desirable to gather for *dhikr* (mention/remembrance of Allah) and the Qur'ān is the best *dhikr*. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has angels who go around the pathways seeking the people of *dhikr*, and then if they find people remembering Allah ﷻ they cry, 'Come to what you need!' Then the angels encircle them with their wings up to the lower sky. Their Lord asks them – though He knows better than them – 'What do My slaves say?'" He said, "They reply, 'They glorify You, magnify You, praise You and declare You glorious.' He says, 'Have they seen Me?' They reply, 'No! By Allah, they haven't seen You.' So He says, 'How would it be if they saw Me?' They reply, 'If they saw You, they would worship You more devoutly and glorify and praise You more deeply, and more often declare Your freedom from defect and from any resemblance to anything.' He

asks, ‘What do they ask Me for?’ They reply, ‘They ask You for the Garden.’ He asks, ‘Have they seen it?’ They answer, ‘No! By Allah! Lord, they have not seen it.’ Allah asks, ‘How would it be if they saw it?’ They reply, ‘If they saw it, they would covet it even more, they would seek it with greater zeal and would have greater desire for it.’ He asks, ‘From what do they seek refuge?’ They reply, ‘From the Fire.’ Allah asks, ‘Have they seen it?’ They answer, ‘No, By Allah! Lord, they have not seen it.’ Allah asks, ‘How would it be if they saw it?’ They answer, ‘If they had seen it they would flee from it strenuously and would have even more fear of it.’ Then Allah, exalted is He, says, ‘I make you witnesses that I have forgiven them.’ One of the angels says, ‘So-and-so was among them, and he was not one of them, but he had just come for some need.’ He says, ‘They are the assembly [who are such that] the ones who sit with them will not come to grief.’”

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Muʿāwiyah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to find a circle of his Companions and he asked, “What makes you sit?” They answered, “We sit remembering Allah ﷻ and we praise Him because He guided us to Islam and gave it to us as a generous gift.” He said, “By Allah! That is

the only thing that has made you sit?" They answered, "By Allah! that is the only thing that has made us sit." He said, "As for me, I did not make you swear an oath because of any suspicion of you. Jibrīl came to me and informed me that Allah, exalted is He, is boasting of you to the angels."[45]

Al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith of Muʿāwiyah that he said, "I was with the Prophet ﷺ one day and he entered the mosque and there were some people sitting. The Prophet ﷺ asked, 'What makes you sit?' and they answered, 'We prayed the obligatory prayer, and then we sat reminding each other of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'When Allah remembers something [among the angels] its remembrance is incomparably great.'"[46] There are numerous other hadith in the same sense.

He ﷻ informed us that the recompense for those who sit in the House of Allah and study the Book of Allah together consists of four things:

First, the descent of tranquillity [*sakīnah*] upon them. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from al-Barā' ibn ʿĀzib that he said, "A man was reciting Sūrat al-Kahf while there was a horse with him, and a cloud

spread over him. It went around him and drew nearer, and the horse began to try to flee from it. In the morning he went to the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned it to him, and he said, 'That was *sakīnah* which descended because of the Qur'ān.'"[47]

There is also in both of them from Abū Saʿīd that while Usayd ibn Hudayr was reciting one night in his stockade, his horse became excited. Then he recited and it became excited again. Then he recited and it also became excited. Usayd said, "I was afraid that it would step on Yaḥyā," – meaning his son. He said, "So I stood up and went to it, and there was something like a covering shade above my head in which there were things like lamps which then gradually ascended in the atmosphere until I no longer could see it." He said, "So I went to the Prophet ﷺ in the morning and mentioned that to him, and he ﷺ said, 'Those were the angels who were listening to you, and if you had [continued to] recite, in the morning people would have seen them and they would not have been concealed from them.'" The wording is Muslim's in both of them.[48]

Ibn al-Mubārak narrated from Yaḥyā ibn Ayyūb from ʿUbaydullāh ibn Zaḥr from Saʿīd ibn Masʿūd that

the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was in an assembly and he raised his eyes to the sky, and then he lowered his eyes and then again raised them. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about that and he said, "These people were remembering Allah," – meaning the people in the assembly before him – "and the *sakīnah* descended over them, the angels carrying it like a pavilion. When it drew near to them one man among them began to talk of something vain and false, and so it was removed from them." This is a *mursal* hadith.

Second, the covering of mercy. Allah, exalted is He, says:

إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Allah's mercy is close to the good-doers."[49]

Al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith of Salmān that he was among a group who were remembering Allah, exalted is He, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by them and said, "What were you saying? Because I saw mercy descending upon you and I wanted to share in it with you."[50]

Al-Bazzār narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has companies of travelling

angels who search out the circles of *dhikr*, and when they come upon them they surround them. Then they send their scout to heaven to the Lord of Might, blessed is He and exalted, saying, 'Our Lord we have come upon some of Your slaves who declare Your blessings to be vast, they recite Your Book and they send blessings upon Your Prophet. They ask You for their *ākhirah* and for their worldly lives.' He says, blessed is He and exalted, 'Cover them with My mercy.' They say, 'Our Lord, among them is so-and-so the wrongdoer, and he only embraces them as a matter of adoption.' So He says, exalted is He, 'Cover them with My mercy, (for they are the assembly [who are such that] the ones who sit with them will not come to grief).'"[51]

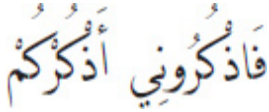
Third, the angels encircle them, and this is mentioned in these hadith which we have cited. There is in a previously mentioned hadith of Abū Hurayrah, "They encircle them with their wings up to the lower heaven." There is a version of Imam Aḥmad, "They rise one over another until they reach the Throne."[52]

Khālid ibn Maʿdān said, narrating it as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Allah has angels in the air who travel between heaven and earth seeking *dhikr*. When they

find some people remembering Allah, exalted is He, they say, ‘Gently, may Allah give you increase.’ They spread their wings around them until their words ascend to the Throne.” Al-Khallāl narrated it in the book *as-Sunnah*.

Fourth, that Allah mentions them among those who are with Him. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ says, ‘I am in My slave’s opinion of Me. I am with him when he remembers Me. So if he remembers Me in himself, I remember him in Myself. If he remembers Me in an assembly, I remember him in an assembly better than them.’”[53]

These are the four qualities of all those who gather for remembrance of Allah, exalted is He, as is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah and Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The people of *dhikr* of Allah have four [matters]: the *sakīnah* (tranquillity) descends upon them, mercy encompasses them, the angels encircle them and the Lord remembers them among those who are with Him.” Allah, exalted is He, says:



“Remember Me – I will remember you.”[54] Allah’s remembering His slave is His praising him in the Highest Assembly among the angels and His boasting of him to them and His elevating him by the remembrance of Him. Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Anas said, “Allah remembers whoever remembers Him, and He gives extra to whoever is grateful to Him, and He punishes whoever is ungrateful [*kāfir*] to Him.” He says ﷻ:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

“You who have *īmān*! remember Allah much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. It is He Who calls down blessing on you, as do His angels, to bring you out of the darkness into the light.”[55] His calling down blessings [*ṣalāh*] is His praising him among the angels and His elevating him by his remembrance of Him. So said Abū’l-ʿAliyyah. Al-Bukhārī mentioned it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

A man said to Abū Umāmah, “I saw in my sleep as if the angels were calling down blessings on you every time you enter and every time you go out, every time you stand and every time you sit down.” Abū Umāmah

said, “And you [too] if you wish, the angels will call down blessings on you.” Then he recited: “You who have *īmān*! remember Allah much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening. It is He Who calls down blessing on you, as do His angels.[56]” Al-Ḥākim narrated it.[57]

His saying ﷺ, “Whoever’s deeds hold him back will not be advanced by his lineage,” means that action is the thing by which the slave attains the degrees of the *ākhirah*, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا۟

“All have ranks according to what they did.”[58] Whoever’s actions hold him back from attaining the highest abodes with Allah, exalted is He, will not be hastened by his lineage to attain those degrees, because Allah arranges the recompense according to the deeds and not according to lineage. As He says, exalted is He:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

“Then when the Trumpet is blown, that Day there will be no family ties between them; they will not be able to question one another.”[59] Allah, exalted is He, orders us to hasten to His forgiveness and His mercy by actions, as He says:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ

“Race each other to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the people who have *taqwā*: those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage…”[60] until the end of the two *āyāt*. He says:

الَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ

“Those who are filled with the fear[61] of their Lord, those who have *īmān* in the Signs of their Lord, those who do not associate anything with their Lord, those who give what they have given, their hearts fearful of their return to their Lord, such people are truly racing

towards good things, and they are the first to reach them."[62]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "Allah gives the command for the *Ṣirāṭ* and it is laid over Jahannam. People pass over in groups according to the measure of their actions. The first of them are like a flash of lightning, then like the passage of the wind, then like the flight of birds, then like the passage of animals until a man passes over running, and so much so that a man passes over walking, and so much so that the last of them passes over thrown on his belly, and so he will ask, 'Lord, why have You held me back?' And He will answer, 'I did not hold you back, but it was only your actions that held you back.'"

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said at the time that:

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

'Warn your near relatives,"[63] was revealed, 'Community of Quraysh, purchase yourselves from Allah; I cannot avail you in any way with Allah. Banī ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, I cannot avail you in any way with

Allah. ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, I cannot avail you in any way with Allah. Ṣafiyyah paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allah, I cannot avail you in any way with Allah. Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad, ask of me whatever you wish, I cannot avail you in any way with Allah.'"[64] In a version outside of the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books there is, "My close friends among you are the people of *taqwā*. Let it not be that people bring actions, and you bring the world carrying it on your necks, saying, 'Muḥammad!' so that I say, 'I conveyed [the message]!'"

Ibn Abi'd-Dunya narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "My close friends are the people of *taqwā* on the Day of Rising, even though some lineages are closer than others. People will bring deeds and you will bring the world carrying it on your necks saying, 'Muḥammad! Muḥammad!' so that I will say, 'It is like this, it is like this!' and he turned [away from them] from side to side [demonstrating how his response will be to turn away from them].[65]

Al-Bazzār narrated the hadith of Rifāʿah ibn Rāfiʿ that the Prophet ﷺ said to ʿUmar, "Collect your people together for me," meaning Quraysh, and so he

collected them and said, “My close friends among you are those who have *taqwā*, so if you are those then that is that, but if not then look out! Let it not be that people bring their deeds on the Day of Rising and you bring [your] burdens, and then you are ignored.”[66] Al-Ḥākim narrated it in an abridged form and he declared it as *ṣaḥīḥ*.

There is in the *Musnad* from Muʿādh ibn Jabal that when the Prophet ﷺ sent him to the Yemen, he went out [of Madīnah for a distance] with him counselling him, and then he turned back with his face towards Madīnah and said, “The closest people to me are those who have *taqwā* whoever they are and wherever they are.” Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it and had the extra portion, “These people of my house think that of all people they have the most right to me, and it is not like that. My closest friends among you are the people of *taqwā*, whoever they are and wherever they are.”[67]

What testifies to all of that is what is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “The family of Abū so-and-so are not my close friends. My friend is only Allah and the right-acting of the *mu’minūn*,” indicating that proximity to him cannot be attained by lineage even that of very close

family, but that it is only attained by *īmān* and right action. Whoever is more complete in *īmān* and action, is greater in his closeness to him, whether or not he is a close relative of his. In this sense someone said:

> By your life! man is only according to his *dīn*,
> so do not abandon *taqwā* trusting to your lineage.
> Islam raised Salmān Fāris,
> and *shirk* humbled the wretchedAbū Lahab.

1 Abū Dāwūd (3460), Ibn Mājah (2199), and Aḥmad (2:152)

2 Al-Bukhārī (2442), Muslim (2580)

3 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (19:350)

4 Aḥmad (4:104)

5 Al-Bukhārī (1284) and Muslim (923)

6 Muslim (2613) and Abū Dāwūd (3045)

7 “They are given the choicest sealed wine to drink.” Sūrat al-Muṭaffifin: 25

8 “They will wear green garments of fine silk and rich brocade.” Sūrat ad-Dahr or al-Insān: 21

9 At-Tirmidhī (2449)

10 Also narrated by Abū Yaʿlā (3490)

11 Al-Bukhārī (3340), Muslim (194)

12 Al-Bukhārī (6527), Muslim (2859)

13 Sūrat al-Muṭaffifin: 6

14 Al-Bukhārī (6531), Muslim (2862)

15 Al-Bukhārī (6532), Muslim (2863)

16 Muslim (2864)

17 Aḥmad (4:147)

18 Sūrat al-Furqān: 26

19 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 280

20 Al-Bukhārī (2078), Muslim (1562)

21 Muslim (1561)

22 Muslim (1563)

23 Muslim (3006)

24 Aḥmad (2:23)

25 Ibn Mājah (2546)

26 Aḥmad (4:159)

27 Aḥmad (4:420), Abū Dāwūd (4859)

28 At-Tirmidhī (2032)

29 Sūrat an-Nūr: 19

30 Abū Dāwūd (4375), an-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā*

31 Al-Bukhārī (2314), Muslim (1297) and others

32 Aḥmad (6:372)

33 Narrated by Ibn Saʿd in his *Ṭabaqāt* (6:43) and al-Bazzār (2903).

34 Al-Bukhārī (2890), Muslim (1119)

35 Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (306)

36 Sūrat al-Qamar: 17

37 Sūrah Muḥammad: 17

38 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 15-16

39 Aḥmad (3:157)

40 Al-Bukhārī (1000), Muslim (2673)

41 Muslim (2949)

42 Muslim (148) and others

43 Al-Bukhārī (5027)

44 Al-Bukhārī (4582), and Muslim (800)

45 Muslim (2701)

46 Al-Ḥākim (1:94)

47 Al-Bukhārī (5011), Muslim (795)

48 Al-Bukhārī (5018), Muslim (796)

49 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 56

50 Al-Ḥākim (1:122)

51 Al-Bazzār (*Kashf*:3062)

52 Aḥmad (2:358)

53 Al-Bukhārī (7405), Muslim (2675)

54 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 152

55 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 41-43

56 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 41-43

57 Al-Ḥākim (2:418)

58 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 132

59 Sūrat al-Mu’minūn: 101

60 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 133-4

61 “Anxious out of awe of their Lord.” Ed.

62 Sūrat al-Mu’minūn: 57-61

63 Sūrat ash-Shuʿarā’: 214

64 Al-Bukhārī (2753), Muslim (206)

65 Al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (897)

66 Al-Bazzār (2780)

67 Aḥmad (5:235)

الحديث السابع والثلاثون

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا ، عَنْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ فِيمَا يَرْوِي عَنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ، قَالَ : ﴿ إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ كَتَبَ الْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ ، ثُمَّ بَيَّنَ ذَلِكَ ، فَمَنْ هَمَّ بِحَسَنَةٍ ، فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا ؛ كَتَبَهَا اللهُ لَهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً ، وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا ، فَعَمِلَهَا ؛ كَتَبَهَا اللهُ عِنْدَهُ عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ إِلَى سَبْعِ مِائَةِ ضِعْفٍ ، إِلَى أَضْعَافٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ، وَمَنْ هَمَّ بِسَيِّئَةٍ ، فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا ؛ كَتَبَهَا اللهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً ، وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا ، فَعَمِلَهَا ؛ كَتَبَهَا اللهُ سَيِّئَةً وَاحِدَةً ﴾ . رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ .

Good and Bad Actions

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ narrated from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in that which he related from his Lord, blessed is He and exalted, "Allah has written the good and bad actions, then He explained that. Whoever intends to do a good action but does not do it, Allah writes it down with Himself as a complete good action. If he intends to do it and does it, Allah writes it down with Himself as ten good actions, up to seven hundred multiples [of it], up to many multiples [of it]. If he intends to do a wrong action then does not do it,

Allah writes it down with Himself as a complete good action. If he intends to do it and then does it, Allah writes it down as a single wrong action." Al-Bukhārī (6491) and Muslim (131) narrated it.

The two of them narrated this hadith in the version of al-Jaʿd Abī ʿUthmān, "Abū Rajā' al-ʿUṭāridī narrated to us from Ibn ʿAbbās...," and in a version of Muslim there is some extra at the end of the hadith which is, "... or Allah effaces it, and none perishes with Allah but one who [is destined to] perish."[1]

In this sense there are many other hadith. The two of them narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah says, 'If My slave intends to do a wrong action, do not write it down against him until he does it. Then if he does it, write it down with the like of it. If he abandons it for My sake, then write it down for him as a good action. If he intends to do a good action but does not do it, then write it down for him as a good action. Then if he does it, then write it down as ten the like of it up to seven-hundred multiples." This is the wording of al-Bukhārī.[2] In a version of Muslim there is, "Allah ﷻ said, 'If My slave talks of doing a good action, then I write it down for him as a good action as long as he

does not do it. Then if he does it, I write it down as ten the like of it. If he talks of doing a wrong action, then I forgive him it as long as he does not do it. Then if he does it, I write it down as [a single wrong action] the like of it.'"[3] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The angels said, 'Lord! that slave of Yours intends to do a wrong action," – and He sees him more [than do they] – He says, "Watch him! Then if he does it, write it down as [a single wrong action] the like of it. If he abandons it then write it down as a good action. He only abandons it for My sake."[4] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If any of you makes good his Islam, then every good action he does is recorded as ten the like of it up to seven-hundred multiples. Every wrong action he does is recorded as [a single wrong action] the like of it, until he meets Allah."[5]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every action of the son of Ādam is multiplied: the good action by ten the like of it up to seven hundred multiples. Allah ﷻ said, '...except for fasting because it is for My sake, and I will recompense it. He gives up his appetite, his food and his drink for My sake.'"[6] There is in one version after his words, "...up to seven hundred multiples..."

the extra words, "... up to whatever [amount of multiples] Allah wills."

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah says, 'Whoever does a good act, has ten the like of it or I will give more. Whoever does a wrong act, his recompense is the like of it or I will forgive it.'"[7]

In it also there is from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever intends to do a good action, but does not do it, will have a good action written for him. Then if he does it, ten will be written for him. Whoever intends to do a wrong action but does not do it will have nothing written against him. If he does it, then one wrong action is written against him."

There is in the *Musnad* from Khuraym ibn Fātik that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever intends to do a good action but does not do it, and Allah knows that his heart had clung to it and was eager to do it, then it is written as a good action for him. Whoever intends to do a wrong action then it is not written against him. Whoever does it then it is written for him as a single wrong action and it is not multiplied against him. Whoever does a good action it will be ten the like of it for him. Whoever spends some expenditure in the way

of Allah, then it will become seven hundred multiples of it for him."[8] In this same sense there are many other hadith.

These texts contain the recording of good and wrong actions, intending to do good and wrong actions, and these are four types:

The first type, doing good actions so that the good action is multiplied to ten the like of it up to seven hundred multiples and up to many multiples. The multiplication of good actions with ten the like of them is a must for each single good action, which is shown by His saying, exalted is He:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا

"Those who produce a good action will receive ten like it."[9]

As for multiplication in excess of ten for whoever Allah wills to multiply it, that is shown by His saying, exalted is He:

مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“The metaphor of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah is that of a grain which produces seven ears; in every ear there are a hundred grains. Allah gives such multiplied increase to whomever He wills. Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.”[10] This *āyah* shows that expenditure in the way of Allah is multiplied seven hundred times.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* there is that Abū Masʿūd said, “A man came with a female camel with a halter and he said, ‘Messenger of Allah, this is in the way of Allah.’ He said, ‘Because of it you will have seven hundred she-camels on the Day of Rising.’”[11]

There is in the *Musnad*, with a chain of transmission about which there are some views, from Abū ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever spends excess expenditure in the way of Allah, then it is [rewarded] by seven hundred [multiples]. Whoever spends upon himself and his family, or visits a sick person or removes something bothersome then a good action is [rewarded] by ten the like of it.”[12]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Sahl ibn Muʿādh from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The prayer, fasting and *dhikr* [remembrance of Allah] are

multiplied over expenditure in the way of Allah with seven hundred multiples."[13]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated[14] with his chain of transmission from al-Ḥasan from ʿImrān ibn al-Husayn that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever sends some of his expenditure in the way of Allah and remains residing in his house, he has for each dirham seven hundred dirhams. Whoever goes himself on an expedition in the way of Allah, will have for every dirham [he spends] seven hundred thousand dirhams." He then recited this *āyah*:

وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ

"Allah gives such multiplied increase to whoever He wills."[15]

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the hadith of ʿĪsā ibn al-Musayyab from Nāfiʿ that Ibn ʿUmar said, "When this *āyah* was revealed, 'The metaphor of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah is that of a grain which produces seven ears...'[16] the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Lord, give increase to my ummah!' and so Allah, exalted is He, revealed:

مَّن ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضاً حَسَناً فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافاً كَثِيرَةً

‘Is there anyone who will make Allah a generous loan so that He can multiply it for him many times over?”[17] and so he said, ‘Lord, give increase to my ummah!’ and Allah, exalted is He, revealed:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

‘The steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning.’[18]”[19]

Imam Aḥmad narrated the hadith of ʿAlī ibn Zayd ibn Judʿān from Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah will multiply a good action [to] a thousand thousand good actions.” Then Abū Hurayrah recited:

وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْراً عَظِيماً

“And if there is a good deed Allah will multiply it and pay out an immense reward direct from Him.”[20] Then he said, “If Allah says an ‘immense reward’, who is able to estimate His measure?” It has also been narrated from Abū Hurayrah as a *mawqūf* statement.[21]

At-Tirmidhī narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿUmar, “Whoever enters the market place and says:

لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لاَ يَمُوتُ، بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

‘There is no god but Allah alone without partner to Him. His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He gives life and He gives death, and He is the Living Who does not die. In His hand is the good, and He is able to do all things,’ then Allah will write one thousand thousand good actions for him, and efface from [his record] one thousand thousand wrong actions, and raise him up one thousand thousand degrees.”[22]

There is a *marfūʿ* hadith of Tamīm ad-Dārī, “Whoever says ten times:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَّا إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ، إِلَهاً وَاحِداً أَحَداً صَمَداً لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ صَاحِبَةً وَلاَ وَلَداً وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ

‘I witness that there is no god but Allah alone with no partner to Him, One God, Absolute Oneness, Everlasting Sustainer of all, Who did not take a female companion nor a child, and no one is comparable to Him,’ then Allah will record for him forty thousand

thousand good actions."[23] There is some weakness in both chains of transmission.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with a weak chain of transmission from Ibn ʿUmar in a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever says, '*Subḥāna'llāh* – Glory be to Allah,' Allah will record for him one hundred and twenty-four thousand good actions."[24]

His saying in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah, "...except for the fast, because it is for Me, and I will recompense it," shows that only Allah knows the measure of the multiplication of the reward for fasting ﷻ because it is the best type of patience. "The steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning."[25] This same sense has been narrated from a party of the right-acting first generations among them Kaʿb and others. We have previously mentioned in commentary on the hadith, "A part of the excellence of a man's Islam is his leaving alone what does not concern him," that the multiplication of good actions in excess of ten multiples is according to the excellence of [the person's] Islam, as has been stated openly and clearly in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah and others, and it is according to the perfection of sincerity, and according to the merit of that action

itself, and in accordance to the need for it. We have mentioned in the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar that His saying, “Those who produce a good action will receive ten like it,”[26] was revealed about the desert Arabs, and that His saying, “And if there is a good deed Allah will multiply it and pay out an immense reward direct from Him,”[27] was revealed about the Muhājirūn.

The second type is wrong actions for which a wrong action is recorded like for like without multiplication, as He says, exalted is He:

وَمَن جَاء بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلاَ يُجْزَى إِلاَّ مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لاَ يُظْلَمُونَ

“But those who produce a bad action will only be repaid with its equivalent and they will not be wronged.”[28]

His saying, “A single wrong action will be recorded for him,” indicates that it is not multiplied which is stated clearly in another hadith. However the wrong action is sometimes magnified greatly because of the nobility of a time or a place, as He says, exalted is He:

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِندَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْراً فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ
مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلاَ تَظْلِمُواْ فِيهِنَّ أَنفُسَكُمْ

“There have been twelve months with Allah in the Book of Allah, from the day He first created the heavens and earth. Four of them are *ḥarām*. That is the True Deen. So do not wrong one another during them.”[29] ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah said that Ibn ʿAbbās said about this *āyah*, “So do not wrong one another during them,” he said, “...during all of them [all of the months] and then He singled out from that the four months and made them *ḥarām* and magnified their sanctity, making a wrong action in them much more serious as well as [multiplying] right action and making the reward more tremendous.”

Qatādah said concerning this *āyah*, “Know that wronging through injustice during the sacred months is a more serious wrong action and burden than it is in others, even if unjust wrongdoing in any case is not good. However, Allah, exalted is He, magnifies anything of His affair He wishes, exalted is He our Lord.”

It is narrated in two *marfūʿ* hadith that wrong action is multiplied in Ramaḍān, but their chains of transmission are not sound.

Allah, exalted is He, says:

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَن فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

"The Ḥajj takes place during certain well-known months. If anyone undertakes the obligation of Ḥajj in them, there must be no sexual intercourse, no wrongdoing, nor any quarrelling during Ḥajj."[30] Ibn ʿUmar said, "Wrongdoing is what is perpetrated from the acts of the disobedience of Allah whether hunting or otherwise." It is also narrated from him that he said, "Wrongdoing is to perpetrate acts of disobedience of Allah in the Ḥaram."

He, exalted is He, says:

وَمَن يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِإِلْحَادٍ بِظُلْمٍ نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

"Those who desire to profane it with wrongdoing, We will let them taste a painful punishment."[31]

A body of the Companions used to be wary of residing in the Ḥaram for fear of doing wrong actions in it, among them Ibn ʿAbbās and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, and similarly ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ used to say, "A wrong action in itis much more serious." It is narrated that ʿUmar ibnal-Khaṭṭāb used to say, "That I should make

seventy wrong actions," – meaning outside Makkah – "is preferrable to me than making one wrong action in Makkah." Mujāhid said, "Wrong actions are multiplied in Makkah just as good actions are multiplied." Ibn Jurayj said, "It has reached me that a wrong action in Makkah is [recorded] as one hundred wrong actions, and that the good action is similar to that."

Isḥāq ibn Manṣūr said, "I asked Aḥmad, 'Is there anything in the hadith that a wrong action is recorded as more than one?' He answered, 'No, we have only heard about that in Makkah because of the exalted nature of the land, "Even if a man in ʿAdn Abyan [a place in the Yemen] desires...". Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh said the same as Aḥmad. His saying, "Even if a man in ʿAdn Abyan desires..." is a saying of Ibn Masʿūd, and we will mention it in what follows, inshā'Allāh, exalted is He.

A wrong action can be multiplied because of the nobility of the onewho does it and the strength of his gnosis of Allah and his nearness to Him, because the one who disobeys the ruler right on his carpet is a worse criminal than someone who disobeys him at a great distance. For this reason Allah threatens His elect slaves with multiplication of the recompense for

disobedience – even if He had protected them from doing them – in order to make clear to them His overflowing bounty to them by His protecting them from that, as He says, exalted is He:

وَلَوْلاَ أَن ثَبَّتْنَاكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئاً قَلِيلاً إِذاً لَّأَذَقْنَاكَ ضِعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضِعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ

"If We had not made you firm, you would have leaned towards them a little. Then We would have let you taste a double punishment in life and a double punishment in death."[32]

He says, exalted is He:

يَا نِسَاء النَّبِيِّ مَن يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَاعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيراً وَمَن يَقْنُتْ مِنكُنَّ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحاً نُّؤْتِهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقاً كَرِيماً

"Wives of the Prophet! if any of you commits an obvious act of indecency she will receive double the punishment. That is an easy matter for Allah. But those of you who are obedient to Allah and His Messenger and act rightly will be given their reward twice over"[33] ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn used to interpret

about the Family of the Prophet ﷺ from Banī Hāshim [that they would receive] the like of that because of their close relationship to the Prophet ﷺ.

The third type is to intend good actions, so that then a complete good action is recorded even if one did not do it, as is in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās and others, and in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah which Muslim narrated as we have seen previously, "If My slave discusses doing a good action, then I write it for him as a good action." The apparent meaning is that what is meant by 'discussing' is to discuss it [inwardly] with oneself, and that is intention. There is in the hadith of Khuraym ibn Fātik, "Whoever intends to do a good action but does not do it, and Allah knows that his heart was attached to it and was eager to do it, then it is written as a good action for him." This shows that what is meant by 'intention' is a persevering resolve accompanied by eager desire to do the action, and not merely the occurrence of the thought which is then undone without resolve or perseverance.

Abū'd-Dardā' said, "Whoever goes to bed intending to pray at night, and then his eyes overcome him [in sleep] until he wakes up, then what he intended is

written for him." It has been narrated from him as a *marfūʿ* hadith, and Ibn Mājah narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith.[34] Ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "What is [correctly] recorded is that it is a *mawqūf* statement," and he narrated the same sense in a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah from the Prophet ﷺ.

It is narrated of Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab that he said, "Whoever intends a prayer or a fast or Ḥajj or *ʿUmrah* or an expedition [in the way of Allah], but then something interposes between him and that, then Allah, exalted is He, will make him attain what he intended."

Abū ʿImrān al-Jūnī said, "The angel will be called, 'Record so-and-so as such-and-such,' and he will say, 'Lord, he didn't do it!' And He will say, 'He intended it.'"

Zayd ibn Aslam said, "A man used to go around the people of knowledge saying, 'Who will show me an action that I will unceasingly do for the sake of Allah? Because I do not like an hour of the night or the day to pass me by without doing something for the sake of Allah, exalted is He.' So someone said to him, 'You have found what you desire: do good actions as long as you are able, and when you cease or give them up,

then intend to do them, because the one who intends to do good actions is just the same as the one who does them.'"

Whoever couples word and exertion of energy with his intention, then the reward is more certain, and he will reach to do the action, as Abū Kabshah narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "The world is for four types: a slave whom Allah has provided with property and knowledge and in that he has *taqwā* of his Lord, and by it he unites his ties of kinship, and he knows the due that Allah is owed in it. This is the best of ranks. Then there is a slave whom Allah has provided with knowledge, but He has not provided him with property. Nevertheless, he is true in his intention, saying, 'If only I had property, then I would have done the deeds of so-and-so,' and so it is according to his intention, and the reward of these two is equal. Then there is a slave whom Allah provides with property but He does not provide him with knowledge and who undertakes to use his property without knowledge, and does not have *taqwā* of his Lord in it, nor does he unite ties of kinship with it, nor does he recognise the due of Allah in it, and this is one of the foulest of stations. Then there is a slave whom

Allah does not provide with property or knowledge, and he says, ‘If only I had property, I would definitely use it the way that so-and-so does [the man who has property but no knowledge]’ and so they are equal in their criminal burden.” Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated it, and this is the latter’s wording, and also Ibn Mājah narrated it.[35]

His saying, “The two of them are equal in reward,” has been interpreted to mean equality in the original reward for the action rather than for the multiplication of rewards, because the multiplication of rewards is particularly for someone who actually does the action rather than merely intending it but not doing it, because if they were to be equal in every respect, there would be recorded ten good actions for the person who intended a good action but did not do it, which contradicts all of the texts. What also shows that is His words, exalted is He:

فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُلاًّ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْراً عَظِيماً دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْهُ

“Allah has given those who do *jihād* with their wealth and themselves a higher rank than those who stay behind. Allah has promised the Best to both, but

Allah has preferred those who do *jihād* over those who stay behind by an immense reward: high ranks conferred by Him."[36] Ibn ʿAbbās and others said, "The ones who stay behind over whom the *mujāhidūn* have a higher rank are the ones who stay behind because of reasonable excuse, and the ones who stay behind over whom the mujahidun have many degrees of rank are the ones who stay behind without reasonable excuse."[37]

The fourth type is to have an intention to do wrong actions but without acting on the intention. There is in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that it is recorded for the person as a complete good action. Similarly, in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah, Anas and others there is that it is recorded as a good action. In the hadith of Abū Hurayrah he said, "He only gave it up for My sake," meaning "because of Me." This shows that what is meant is someone who is able to do that act of disobedience which he intends but who gives it up for the sake of Allah, exalted is He. There is no doubt that this is written down for him as a good action because his giving up the act of disobedience with this purpose is a right action.

As for someone who intends an act of disobedience and then gives it up for fear of people or as an act of showing off to them, then some say that he is punished for giving it up with this intention, because giving priority to fear of people over the fear of Allah is *ḥarām*. Similarly, the intention of showing off to people is *ḥarām*, so if it is coupled with giving up the act of disobedience for the sake of it [showing off], then he is punished for this [type of] giving up. Abū Nuʿaym narrated with a weak chain of transmission from Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "O wrongdoer! do not feel secure from the harm of His punishment! That which follows the wrong action is greater than the wrong action itself when you have done it," and he mentioned some things, and he said, "Your fear of the wind when it moves the curtain over your door and you are involved in doing wrong while your heart does not palpitate from the gaze of Allah towards you is worse than the wrong action itself when you do it."[38]

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, "They used to say, 'Giving up an action for the sake of people is showing off, but doing an action for their sake is *shirk* [ascription of a partner to Allah].'"

As for if someone exerts himself to attain something by means of that which would make it possible and then later the Decree interposes itself between him and it, then a body [of people of knowledge] mentioned that he will then be punished for that because of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "Allah passes over for my ummah that which they consider doing within themselves as long as they do not talk about it or act."[39] Whoever exerts himself and endeavours to achieve some act of disobedience and then is incapable of it, has acted. Similarly, there is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "If two Muslims meet with their swords, then both the killer and the man who is killed are in the Fire." They asked, "This [is understandable about the killer] but what about the man who has been killed?" He answered, "He was eager to kill his fellow."[40]

His saying, "As long as they do not talk about it or act," shows that if the person who intends an act of disobedience talks about it verbally then he is punished for his intention at that time, because he acted out an act of disobedience with his limbs, i.e. by saying it with his tongue. What demonstrates that is the hadith in which [a man] says, "If only I had wealth

then I would have done with it that which so-and-so did," referring to someone who disobeyed Allah with his property, and so he said, "They are both equal in their criminal burden."

Some later scholars said, "He is not punished for talking about that which he intends to do as long as the act of disobedience which he intends is not itself a forbidden verbal expression such as sexual slander, backbiting and lying. As for that which is connected to actions with the limbs, then there is no guilt simply by talking about what one wants to do." This is sought to be proved by the foregoing hadith of Abū Hurayrah, "If My slave talks of doing a wrong action, then I forgive him as long as he does not do it." However, what is meant by the hadith here is considering the action, uniting the sense of this with his saying, "As long as he does not talk about it or act on it." The hadith of Abū Kabshah shows that clearly, because the words of someone on his tongue, "If only I had property I would use it for acts of disobedience as does so-and-so," is not itself doing the acts of disobedience intended, but rather he was only informing us about what he meant to do of those things connected to spending property on acts of disobedience, even

though he had absolutely no property. Also, talking about that is *ḥarām*, so how could it be pardoned, absolved and unpunished?

As for if his intention is undone and his resolve is interrupted without any reason on his part, then as to whether or not he is punished for what disobedience he intended, there are two divisions:

First, there is the case where the intention to commit an act of disobedience is only a passing thought to which the person gives no reality, and he does not resolve on it in his heart, but rather he dislikes it and flees from it, then this person is pardoned and absolved. This is like the ugly whisperings about which the Prophet ﷺ was asked and he answered, "That is the clarity of *īmān*."

When His saying, exalted is He, was revealed:

وَإِن تُبْدُواْ مَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ

"Whether you divulge what is in yourselves or keep it hidden, Allah will still call you to account for it. He forgives whoever He wills and He punishes whoever He wills,"[41] that was difficult for the Muslims and they thought that these passing thoughts are included in it,

and so the *āyah* following it was revealed, in which is His saying:

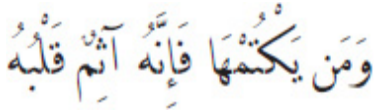
رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ

"Our Lord, do not place on us a load we have not the strength to bear!"[42] That made clear that whatever one has not the strength to bear one is not taken to task for it, nor is it imposed on one as a task and responsibility. Ibn ʿAbbās and others called that 'abrogation', and they meant that this *āyah* removes the illusions that occurred to people because of the first *āyah*, and it explains that what is meant by the first *āyah* is the resolves in which one perseveres. It was the like of this [usage] which the right-acting first generations called abrogation.

The second division are those persistent resolves which occur to people and which continue and to which the person gives room, and these too are of two types:

First, an act which is in itself an independent act of the heart, such as doubt concerning the Oneness [of Allah], of prophethood or of the rising [from the dead], etc., and other such types of *kufr* and hypocrisy,

or believing in the denial of that. For all of this the slave is punished, and by that he becomes a *kāfir* or a hypocrite. It has been narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās that he interpreted His saying, exalted is He, "Whether you divulge what is in yourselves or keep it hidden, Allah will still call you to account for it. He forgives whoever He wills and He punishes whoever He wills,"[43] as referring to the like of this. It is narrated that he also interpreted it to mean concealing testimony (*shahādah*) because of His saying, exalted is He:



"If someone does conceal it, his heart commits a crime."[44]

Attached to this category are all other acts of disobedience connected to the heart such as love for that which Allah hates and hatred of what Allah loves, arrogant pride, conceit, envy and an evil opinion of a Muslim without anything that requires that, although it is narrated of Sufyān that he said concerning evil opinion that if word and deed do not result from it, then it is pardoned. It is similarly narrated of al-Ḥasan

that he said [the same] about envy, and probably this statement of theirs is to be interpreted as referring to that which a person experiences and is unable to repel, but he dislikes it and attempts to thrust it away from himself, so that he does not rush in [to wrong action] unless it is that with which he is at rest and in which he finds ease, and he repeatedly thinks about it and talks about it openly.

The second type is that which is not one of the actions of the heart, but is rather one of the actions of the limbs, such as adultery, theft, taking intoxicants [literally drinking wine], murder, slander of a sexual nature, and the like when the slave perseveres in willing that and is resolved to do it, even though no trace of it ever appears in the outward. Concerning his being taken to task for this there are two well-known statements from the people of knowledge:

First, that he is taken to task for it. Ibn al-Mubārak said, "I asked Sufyān ath-Thawrī, 'Is the slave taken to task for his desire?' He answered, 'If it is a firm resolve, then he is taken to task.'" Many of the fuqahā', hadith narrators and scholars of *kalām* from among our companions and others considered this

statement to outweigh [other statements], and they sought to prove that by the like of His saying ﷻ:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ

"Know that Allah knows what is in your selves, so beware of Him!"[45] and by His saying:

وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ

"but He will take you to task for the intention your hearts have made[46]."[47] and by the likes of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "Guilt (*ithm*) is that which becomes agitated in your breast and which you would hate for people to discover." They interpreted his saying ﷺ, "Allah passes over for my ummah that which they discuss with themselves as long as they do not talk about it or act on it," to refer to passing thoughts and things that occur to the mind. They said, "That which the slave gives room, and he resolves in his heart to do it, then he is punished for it in the *dunyā* by worries and anxieties." That is narrated of ʿĀ'ishah both as a *marfūʿ* hadith and a *mawqūf* statement, and on the soundness of that there are some views.

Some say that on the contrary the slave is taken to account for it on the Day of Rising, and that Allah will make him pause to ponder it and then He will pardon him and will not punish him for it, so that his punishment will in fact be that he is taken to account for it, and this is narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās and ar-Rabīʿ ibn Anas, and it is the chosen position of Ibn Jarīr, and he sought an argument in its favour in the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar concerning intimate and confidential conversation,[48] but in that there is not a general ruling, and it also occurs with respect to wrong actions which are veiled [from people's eyes] in the world and not with respect to the whisperings in the breasts.

The second statement is that one is certainly not taken to task simply for an intention. That is ascribed to a clear statement of ash-Shāfiʿī and it is the verdict of Ibn Ḥāmid of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] acting according to the general principles. Al-ʿAwfī narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās that which would show the same as this statement.

Concerning it there is a third statement, which is that no one is taken to task for desiring to do an act of disobedience unless he has a strong desire to do that in the Ḥaram, as as-Suddī narrated from Murrah that

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd said, “No slave who is eager to do a wrong action but did not do it will have it written against him. But if he resolves to kill a person at the House and he is at ʿAdn Abyan [in the Yemen], Allah will make him taste a painful punishment,” and ʿAbdullāh recited, “Those who desire to profane it [the House] with wrongdoing, We will let them taste a painful punishment.”[49] Imam Aḥmad and others narrated it. Shuʿbah and Sufyān narrated it from as-Suddī, but Shuʿbah narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith and Sufyān narrated it as a *mawqūf* statement, and the correct position is that of Sufyān that it is a *mawqūf* statement.

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, “A man may resolve to do a wrong action in Makkah while he is in another land, and yet it will be written against him, even though he does not do it.” We have previously seen from Aḥmad and Isḥāq what would prove the like of this statement, and similarly Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā narrated it of Aḥmad. Aḥmad narrated in the narration of al-Marwazī this hadith of Ibn Masʿūd, then Aḥmad said, “He says, ‘Those who desire to profane it [the House] with wrongdoing.’” Aḥmad said, “Even if a man in ʿAdn Abyan desired to kill a man in the Ḥaram, this is the

saying of Allah, glorious is He, ‘We will let them taste a painful punishment.’ This was what Ibn Masʿūd said ﷺ.”

One of them referred this back to what has previously been mentioned of the acts of disobedience which are connected to the hearts, and he said, “It is obligatory to respect and have awe of the Ḥaram in the heart, and it is necessary that there be a punishment for abandoning this,” but this is not sound, because the sanctity of the Ḥaram is not greater than the sanctity of what He has made *ḥarām*, glorious is He, and resolving to disobey Allah is a resolve to violate His sacred things. However, if he were to resolve on that deliberately to violate the sanctity of the Ḥaram considering its sanctity of little importance, then this is as if he had resolved to do an act of disobedience with the intention that he regards the sanctity of the Creator ﷻ as of little significance or consequence, and so he becomes a *kāfir* by that. He is only absolved of *kufr* if his desire in the act of disobedience was simply to satisfy his appetite and the goals of his self, unmindful of intending to oppose Allah or of regarding awe of Him and His gaze upon one of little or no consequence. Whenever action is

coupled with intention then he is punished for that whether or not the action is delayed or advanced. Whoever does something that is *ḥarām* one time, and then resolves to do it again whenever he is able to do so, is someone who persists in disobedience and is punished for this intention even if he does not return to his deed until after many years. That was how Ibn al-Mubārak and others explained persistence in acts of disobedience.

In any case, disobedience is only recorded as a single act the like of it without multiplication so that the punishment is for the act of disobedience without the desire to disobey being conjoined with it, since if the desire was conjoined to the act of disobedience then the person would be punished for the act of disobedience with two punishments. It cannot be said [by way of objection that], "This requires a similar treatment for good actions, because if he acts after desiring to do [the good act], he will be rewarded for the good act but not for the desire to do it," because we say that this [objection] is rejected, since whoever does a good action will have ten the like of it recorded for him and it is possible that some of these multiple

rewards are a reward for the desire to do the good action, and Allah knows best.

His saying in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās in the narration of Muslim, "Or Allah will efface it," means that either the wrong action is recorded against its perpetrator as a single wrong action, or Allah will efface it by whatever means He wills, such as [the slave's] turning in *tawbah*, seeking forgiveness, and doing right actions. We have previously spoken about those things which efface wrong actions in commentary on the hadith [18] of Abū Dharr, "Have *taqwā* of Allah wherever you are, and follow up a wrong action with a good action which will efface it."

His saying after that, "And none perishes with Allah but one who [is to] perish," means "after this tremendous overflowing favour of Allah, and vast mercy from Him of the multiplication of good actions and passing over of wrong actions, then none perishes with Allah but one who [is to] perish and who throws himself by his own hands to destruction, who advances boldly to do wrong actions and desires not to do good actions and turns away from them in aversion. For this reason Ibn Masʿūd said, "Woe to whoever's single [wrong action] overcomes his tens

[of multiples of good actions].” Al-Kalbī narrated from Abū Ṣāliḥ from Ibn ʿAbbās as a *marfūʿ* hadith, “He perishes whose single [wrong action] overcomes his ten [multiplications of his good action].”

Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī and at-Tirmidhī narrated in a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘There are two practices which if a Muslim enumerates them he will enter the Garden and they are easy but those who do them are few: glorify Allah after every prayer ten times, praise Him ten times, and magnify Him [with *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater] ten times.” He said, “These are one hundred and fifty on the tongue and one thousand five hundred in the scales. Then when you go to bed, glorify Him, magnify Him and praise Him one hundred times, and that is one hundred times on the tongue and one thousand times in the scale. Who of you can do in one day and night two thousand five hundred wrong actions?”[50]

There is in the *Musnad* from Abū’d-Dardā’ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Let none of you give up doing for the sake of Allah one thousand good actions when he rises in the morning saying:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

‘Glory be to Allah and in His praise,’ one hundred times, because it is one thousand good actions and because he will not do, inshā’Allāh exalted is He, the like of that of wrong actions in his daytime, and what he will do of good apart from that will be ample.”[51]

1 Muslim (131)

2 Al-Bukhārī (7501), Muslim (128-130)

3 Muslim (129)

4 Muslim (129)

5 Al-Bukhārī (42), Muslim (129)

6 Al-Bukhārī (1894), Muslim (1151)

7 Muslim (2687)

8 Aḥmad (4:345)

9 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 160

10 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 261

11 Muslim (1892)

12 Aḥmad (1:195)

13 Abū Dāwūd (2498)

14 As mentioned in the *tafsīr* of Ibn Kathīr (1:325), Ibn Mājah also narrated it (2771)

15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 261

16 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 261

17 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 245

18 Sūrat az-Zumar: 10

19 Ibn Ḥibbān (4648)

20 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 40

21 Aḥmad (2:296)

22 At-Tirmidhī (3428)

23 At-Tirmidhī (3473)

24 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (13597)

25 Sūrat az-Zumar: 10

26 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 160

27 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 40

28 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 160

29 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 36

30 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 197

31 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 25

32 Sūrat al-Isrā’: 74-75 607

33 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 30-31

34 Ibn Mājah (1344)

35 At-Tirmidhī (2325), Ibn Mājah (4228) and Aḥmad (4:230)

36 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 95-96

37 At-Tirmidhī (3032)

38 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:324)

39 Al-Bukhārī (2528) and Muslim (127)

40 Al-Bukhārī (31) and Muslim (2888)

41 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 284

42 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 286

43 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 284

44 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 283

45 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 235

46 Literally, “for what your hearts have earned.” Ed.

47 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 225

48 Al-Bukhārī (4685), Muslim (2768)

49 Sūrat al-Ḥajj: 25

50 An-Nasā’ī (3:74), Abū Dāwūd (5060), at-Tirmidhī (3410), Aḥmad (2:502)

51 Aḥmad (6:440)

الحديث الثامن والثلاثون

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ﷺ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى قَالَ: مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا ؛ فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ؛ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ ؛ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ، وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا، وَإِنْ سَأَلَنِي ؛ لَأُعْطِيَنَّهُ، وَلَئِنِ اسْتَعَاذَنِي ؛ لَأُعِيذَنَّهُ﴾. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

Optional Acts and *Wilāyah*

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Allah, exalted is He, said, "Whoever shows enmity to a close friend of Mine, then I declare war on him. My slave does not draw closer to Me with anything more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him. My slave continues to draw closer with optional extra acts until I love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps and his foot with which he walks. If he asks Me I will definitely give him, and if

he seeks refuge with Me I will definitely give him refuge."'" Al-Bukhārī narrated it (6502).

Al-Bukhārī alone narrated this hadith apart from all the rest of the authors of the books. He narrated it from Muḥammad ibn ʿUthmān ibn Karāmah as, "Khālid ibn Makhlad narrated to us, 'Sulaymān ibn Bilāl narrated to us, "Sharīk ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Abī Namir narrated to me from ʿAṭā' from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ,"'" and so he mentioned the full hadith at length, and he added at the end of it, "I [Allah exalted is He] have never hesitated over anything I do as I hesitate over [taking] the soul of a *mu'min* who dislikes death, and I dislike to do ill to him."

It is one of the unusual (*gharīb*) of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* and Ibn Karāmah is unique in narrating it, and it is not in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad even though Aḥmad and others spoke about Khālid ibn Makhlad al-Qaṭwānī. They said, "He has things which are repudiated." As to the ʿAṭā' in his chain of transmission, some said he is Ibn Abī Rabāḥ, and some said he is Ibn Yasār and he occurs in some copies of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* ascribed as such.

This hadith is narrated in other ways none of which are free from criticism. ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn

Maymūn Abū Ḥamzah the *mawlā* of ʿUrwah ibn az-Zubayr narrated it from ʿUrwah from ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever hurts a friend of Mine has reckoned that it is lawful to wage war on Me. My slave does not draw closer to Me with [anything] like the discharge of obligatory duties. My slaves draws near to Me with extra optional acts until I love him. Then when I love him, I become his eye with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps, his foot with which he walks, his heart with which he reasons, and his tongue with which he talks. If he supplicates Me, I will answer him. If he asks Me, I will give him. I have never hesitated about anything which I do as I hesitate over his death. That is because he dislikes death, and I dislike to do ill to him." Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā and others narrated it, and Imam Aḥmad narrated it in the same sense.[1]

Ibn ʿAdī mentioned that this ʿAbd al-Wāḥid alone narrated it from ʿUrwah, and al-Bukhārī said about this ʿAbd al-Wāḥid, "His hadith are rejected." However, aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it: Hārūn ibn Kamil narrated to us, "Saʿīd ibn Abī Maryam narrated to us, 'Ibrāhīm ibn Suwayd al-Madani narrated to us, "Abū Ḥazrah Yaʿqūb ibn Mujāhid narrated to me, "ʿUrwah

informed me from ʿĀ'ishah from the Prophet ﷺ,"""" and he mentioned the hadith. This chain of transmission is fine and all of its men are trustworthy and hadith are narrated from them in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* apart from at-Tabarani's own shaykh, because at present I lack knowledge of his condition. Perhaps the narrator said, "Abū Ḥamzah narrated to us," meaning ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn Maymūn, and the listener was made to imagine that he said "Abū Ḥazrah" and then he gave his full name from his own [understanding] based on this illusion, and Allah knows best.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated in a version of ʿUthmān ibn Abī'l-ʿĀtikah from ʿAlī ibn Yazīd from al-Qāsim from Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ says, 'Whoever despises a friend of Mine has come out onto the field of war against Me. Son of Ādam, you will never grasp what there is with Me except by discharging what I have made obligatory upon you. My slave does not cease drawing nearer to Me by optional extra acts until I love him, and so then I become his heart with which he reasons, his tongue with which he speaks and his sight with which he sees. If he supplicates Me I answer him. If he asks Me, I give him. If he seeks My help, I help him. The most beloved

of My slave's acts of worship is sincerity [or sincere good counsel].'"[2] ʿUthmān and ʿAlī ibn Yazīd are both weak. Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said about this hadith, "It is utterly rejected."

It has been narrated in a hadith of ʿAlī from the Prophet ﷺ with a weak chain of transmission, which al-Ismāʿīlī narrated in the *Musnad* ʿAlī. It has been narrated in a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās with a weak chain of transmission, which aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated, and in which is some extra material. We have also narrated it in another way from Ibn ʿAbbās and it also is weak.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated it in a hadith of al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā al-Khushanī from Ṣadaqah ibn ʿAbdullāh ad-Dimashqī from Hishām al-Kinānī from Anas from the Prophet ﷺ from Jibrīl that his Lord, exalted is He, said, "Whoever despises a friend of Mine has stepped out on to the field of war against Me. I have not hesitated over anything which I do as I hesitate over taking My *mu'min* slave's soul. He dislikes death and I dislike to do him ill, but there is no escaping it for him. Some of My *mu'minūn* slaves want [to enter] a door of worship and I restrain him from it [so that] conceit does not enter into him for that will corrupt him. My slave does not draw nearer

to Me with [anything] like that which I have made obligatory upon him. My slave does not cease to do extra optional acts for My sake until I love him. Whomever I love, I will be for him, hearing, sight, hand and helper. He supplicates Me and I answer him. He asks Me and I give him. He is sincere to Me and I am sincere towards him. Of My slaves there are those whom only freedom from need will make their *īmān* thrive and whom if I made them needy that would corrupt them. Of My slaves there are those whom only need will make their *īmān* thrive and if I expanded [their provision] for them that would corrupt them. Of My slaves there are those whom only good health will make their *īmān* thrive and whom if I made them sick that would corrupt them. Of My slaves there are those whom only sickness will make their *īmān* thrive and whom if I made them in good health that would corrupt them. I manage My slaves by My knowledge of what is in their hearts. I am All-Knowing, All-Aware."[3] Al-Khushanī and Ṣadaqah are both weak, and Hishām is unknown. Ibn Maʿīn was asked about this Hishām, "Who is he?" He answered, "No one," meaning that he is not to be reckoned with. Al-Bazzār narrated some of

the hadith by way of Ṣadaqah from ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jazarī from Anas.

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated a hadith of al-Awzāʿī from ʿAbdah ibn Abī Lubābah, “Zirr ibn Ḥubaysh narrated to me, ‘I heard Ḥudhayfah saying, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Allah, exalted is He, revealed to me, “Brother of the Messengers and Brother of the Warners! warn your people that they should not enter any of My houses while there is someone whom they have wronged – because I curse him as long as he stands before Me praying until he repairs that injustice with those people – so I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, and he will be one of My close and dear friends, and He will be My neighbour along with the prophets, the *ṣiddīqūn* [the completely truthful ones] and the shuhada [the witnesses who give their lives for the truth] in the Garden.”[4] This chain of transmission is fine and it is extremely unusual (*gharīb*).

Let us return to the explanation of the hadith of Abū Hurayrah which alBukhārī mentioned, about which it is said that it is the noblest hadith narrated in mention of the *Awliyā’*.

His saying ﷺ, “Whoever shows enmity to a close friend of Mine then I declare war on him,” meaning, “I inform him that I am waging war on him since he is waging war on Me by showing hostility to My close friends.” For this reason it is narrated in the hadith of ʿĀ’ishah, “He has regarded it permissible to wage war on Me,” and in the hadith of Abū Umāmah and others, “He has stepped onto the field of war against Me.” Ibn Mājah narrated with a weak chain of transmission from Muʿādh ibn Jabal that he heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “A little riyā’ [showing off in one’s deeds] is associating partners [with Allah]. Whoever shows enmity to a close friend of Allah has stepped out onto the field of battle against Allah. Allah, exalted is He, loves the hidden, God-fearing, amply dutifully obedient and good-natured people who if they are absent are not missed, and if they are present are not called and not recognised. [Their hearts] are the lamps of guidance, and they leave every wrong doing assembly.”[5]

It is obligatory to befriend the *awliyā’* of Allah and forbidden to show enmity to them, just as it is obligatory to show enmity to His enemies and forbidden to befriend them. Allah, exalted is He, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ

"You who have *īmān*! do not take My enemy and your enemy as friends,"[6] and He says:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ
وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

"Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who have *īmān*: those who establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*, and bow. As for those who make Allah their friend, and His Messenger and those who have *īmān*: it is the party of Allah who are victorious!"[7] He describes His beloved ones whom He loves and who love Him as being humble to the *mu'minūn*, fierce to the *kāfirūn*. Imam Aḥmad narrated in the book *az-Zuhd* (Doing Without) with his chain of transmission from Wahb ibn Munabbih that he said, "Allah, exalted is He, said to Mūsā ﷺ when he spoke to him, 'Know that whoever despises a friend of Mine, or causes him fear, has stepped out onto the field of battle against Me, and has taken the initiative against Me, has exposed himself and called Me against him, and I am the fastest to help My *awliyā'*. Does the one who wages

war on Me think that he can stand up to Me? Or does the one who strives with Me to overcome Me think that he can incapacitate Me? Or does the one who steps out onto the field of battle against Me think that he can outrun Me or escape Me? How could that be when I am angry against them in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*? So I will not entrust their help to other than Me.'"

Know that all acts of disobedience are a form of waging war on Allah ﷻ. Al-Ḥasan said, "Son of Ādam, have you the energy to wage war on Allah? because whoever disobeys Allah wages war on Him." However, the uglier the wrong action, the more serious is the war waged against Allah, and so for this reason Allah, exalted is He, named those who consume usury and highway robbers 'those who wage war on Allah, exalted is He, and His Messenger' because of the tremendous nature of the injustice they perpetrate on His slaves and because of their exerting themselves to cause corruption in His lands. It is similar with hostility towards His *awliyā'*, because He, exalted is He, undertakes to help His close friends, and He loves them and aids them, so that whoever shows hostility and enmity to them has thus shown hostility and

enmity to Allah and wages war on Him. There is in the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "[Beware of] Allah! Allah! respecting my Companions. Do not take them as a target. Whoever hurts them hurts me. Whoever hurts me hurts Allah. Whoever hurts Allah, then it is likely that He will soon take him to task." At-Tirmidhī[8] and others narrated it.

Concerning His saying, "My slave does not draw close to Me with anything more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him. My slave continues to draw closer with optional extra acts until I love him,"; when He mentioned that enmity to His close friends is waging war on Him, then He mentioned after that the description of His close friends enmity towards whom is *ḥarām* and friendship towards whom is obligatory. He mentioned that with which one may draw closer to Him. The root meaning of close friendship [*wilāyah*] is nearness, and the root meaning of enmity and hostility [*ʿadāwah*] is remoteness. The near ones to Allah are the ones who draw closer to him with that which brings them nearer. His enemies are the ones whom He drives far from Him because their actions necessarily require that they be driven away and made remote from Him.

He divides His close friends who are brought near into two categories:

First, those who draw near to Him by discharge of the obligatory acts, and that comprises the doing of what is a duty and the abandonment of those things which are *ḥarām*, because all of those are a part of the obligations of Allah which He has made obligatory on His slaves.

Second, those who draw closer to Him after the obligations by extra optional acts. Thus it is clear that there is no path which leads to drawing closer to Allah, exalted is He, and to His close friendship and His love other than the obedience to Him which He, on the tongue of His Messenger, has laid down as the road. Whoever claims to be a close friend of Allah, and claims His nearness and His love without this path, then it is clear that he is a liar in his claim, just as the people who associate partners with Allah used to attempt to draw closer to Allah by worshipping those they worshipped apart from Him, as Allah quotes them as saying:

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى

“We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to Allah.”[9] Similarly He narrates that the Jews and the Christians say:

نَحْنُ أَبْنَاء اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ

“We are Allah’s children and His loved ones,”[10] along with their persistence in denying His messengers and doing those things which He forbids and abandoning those things He has made obligatory.

For that reason He mentions in this hadith that the close friends of Allah have two degrees:

First, those who draw nearer to Him by discharging their obligations. This is the degree of the moderate Companions of the Right[11]. Discharge of the obligations is the best of actions as ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said ﷺ, “The best of actions is the discharge of that which Allah makes obligatory and to refrain from that which He has forbidden, and a true intention for that which is with Allah ﷻ.” ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said in a *khuṭbah*, “The best act of worship is to discharge the obligations and avoid what is forbidden. That is because Allah ﷻ only made these obligations obligatory upon His slaves in order to draw them

closer to Him, and to make His good pleasure and His mercy sure for them."

The greatest of the physical obligations which bring one closer to Him is the prayer, as He, exalted is He, says:

وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ

"Prostrate and draw near."[12] The Prophet ﷺ said, "The nearest the slave is to his Lord is while he is prostrating."[13] He said, "When any of you prays he is only holding intimate conversation with his Lord," or, "his Lord is between him and the *qiblah*."[14] He said, "Allah sets up His face towards the face of His slave in his prayer as long as he does not turn away."[15]

One of the obligations which draws one closer to Allah, exalted is He, is the shepherd's justice towards his flock whether his flock is general such as that of the judge or ruler, or specific such as the justice which individual people show to their families and children, as he said ﷺ, "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock."[16]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Those who are just are, with

Allah, on minbars of light on the right of the All-Merciful – and each of His hands is a right hand – those who are just in their rule and their judgement, and to their families and those for whom they are responsible."[17]

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The most beloved of the slaves to Allah on the Day of Rising and the closest of them to Him in the assembly will be a just ruler [imām]."[18]

The second degree is the degree of the Forerunners who are brought near. They are the ones who draw nearer to Allah after the obligations by striving with extra optional acts of obedience, and by restraining themselves, by their scrupulousness and caution, from fine and subtle matters which are disapproved. That necessarily merits the love of Allah for the slave, as He says, "My slave continues to draw closer with optional extra acts until I love him." Whoever Allah loves, He provides him with love of Him, obedience to Him and occupation with His remembrance and His service, and that requires his nearness to Him, and a high rank in His presence, and a state of blessedness and favour with Him, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَلاَ يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لآئِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

"If any of you renounce your *dīn*, Allah will bring forward a people whom He loves and who love Him, humble to the *mu'minūn*, fierce to the *kāfirūn*, who do *jihād* in the Way of Allah and do not fear the blame of any censurer. That is the unbounded favour of Allah which He gives to whoever He wills. Allah is Boundless, All-Knowing."[19] In this *āyah* there is an indication that "whoever turns away from Our love, and turns his back on Our proximity, then We do not care, and We will exchange in his place someone who is more worthy of this gift than him and who has more right to it," so whoever turns from Allah will find that he has nothing in exchange for Allah, but that Allah has substitutes for him.

I have no occupation other than Him, I have no
other occupation
no blame averts my heart from His love.
What shall I do if hope withdraws and fails?

For me there is a substitute, but for Him I
have no substitute.

In some traditions, Allah ﷻ says, “Son of Ādam, seek Me and you will find Me, and if you find Me, you find everything. If I pass you by, everything has passed you by, and I am more beloved to you than everything.”

Dhu’n-Nūn used to repeat these verses a great deal at night:

Seek for yourselves
the like of what I have found.
I have found for myself repose.
In His love there is no distress.
If I am far away, He draws me near,
or if I draw nearer to Him He draws near.

Whomever Allah passes him by, even though he should achieve all of the Garden, will have been deceived, so how then will it be if he only obtains a despicable small paltry portion of an abode the entire sum of which is not worth the wing of a gnat:

Whoever fails to see You for a day,
Then all of his days are lost.

Wherever I am in the lands,
Then it is to Your face I turn.

Then He mentions the descriptions of the ones whom Allah loves and who love Him, and He says, "humble to the *mu'minūn*," meaning that they treat the *mu'minūn* with humility and gentleness and lowering the wing, "fierce to the *kāfirūn*," meaning that they treat the *kāfirūn* with might and are severe towards them, and are tough on them. Since they love Allah, they love His *awliyā'* who love Him and they treat them with love, pity and mercy, and they hate His enemies who show hostility to Him, and they treat them with severity and toughness, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

"... fierce to the *kāfirūn*, merciful to one another,"[20] because a part of the completion of love is to struggle against the Beloved's enemies. Also *jihād* in the way of Allah is a [means of] inviting, by means of the sword and with bite, those who turn away in aversion from Allah, to return to Him, after having invited them with

proof and argument. The one who loves Allah loves to draw all people to His door, but whoever does not respond to the invitation performed softly and gently needs an invitation performed with severity and toughness, “Your Lord is amazed at a people who are led to the Garden in chains.”[21]

وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَآئِمٍ

“And [who] do not fear the blame of any censurer.”[22] The lover has no worry other than that which pleases his Beloved and is pleased with whom He is pleased and displeased with whom He is displeased. Someone who fears blame because of his love for the one he loves is not sincere in his love:

> Love has stopped me where You are and so I am
> unable to retreat from it nor advance.
> I find blame sweet because of love of You,
> Loving Your remembrance, so let those who
> censure do so.

His saying:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ

“That is the unbounded favour of Allah which He gives to whomever He wills,”[23] means the rank of those whom He loves and who love Him, with their aforementioned descriptions:

وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“Allah is Boundless, All-Knowing”[24]: Boundless in giving, All-Knowing of those who deserve favour and so He gives it to him, and of those who do not deserve it and so He refuses it to them.

It is narrated that Dāwūd ﷺ used to say:

اَللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنْ أَحْبَابِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا أَحْبَبْتَ عَبْداً غَفَرْتَ ذَنْبَهُ وَإِنْ كَانَ عَظِيماً ، وَقَبِلْتَ عَمَلَهُ وَإِنْ كَانَ يَسِيراً

“O Allah make me one of Your beloved ones, because if You love a slave You forgive his wrong action even though it is great, and You accept his action even if it is little.”

Dāwūd ﷺ used to say in his supplication:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ والعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُبَلِّغُنِي حُبَّكَ. اَللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي وأَهْلِي وَمِنَ المَاءِ الْبَارِدِ

“O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You and love of the action which will make me attain Your love. O Allah make Your love more beloved to me than my self, my family and cold water.”[25]

The Prophet ﷺ said, “My Lord came to me ﷻ,” – meaning in sleep – “and said to me, ‘Muḥammad! Say:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ والْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُبَلِّغُنِي حُبَّكَ

“O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You and the action which will make me attain Your love.’”’”[26]

One of his supplications was ﷺ:

اَللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَنْفَعُنِي حُبُّهُ عِنْدَكَ . اَللَّهُمَّ مَا رَزَقْتَنِي مِمَّا أُحِبُّ فاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً لِي فِيمَا تُحِبُّ . اَللَّهُمَّ ومَا زَوَيْتَ عَنِّي مِمَّا أُحِبُّ فاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً لِي فِيمَا تُحِبُّ

“O Allah, provide me with Your love and the love of those whose love will benefit me with You. O Allah, that which You have provided me of that which I love, then make it a strength for me in that which You love. O Allah, that which you have removed of what I love, then make it a free space for me for that which You love.”[27]

It has been narrated from him ﷺ that he used to supplicate:

اَللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَنْفَعُنِي حُبُّهُ عِنْدَكَ. اَللَّهُمَّ مَا رَزَقْتَنِي مِمَّا أُحِبُّ فَاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً لِي فِيمَا تُحِبُّ. اَللَّهُمَّ وَمَا زَوَيْتَ عَنِّي مِمَّا أُحِبُّ فَاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً لِي فِيمَا تُحِبُّ

"O Allah, make Your love the most beloved of things to me, and Your fear the most fearful of things to me, and sever for me the needs of the *dunyā* by longing for meeting You, and when You give delight to the eyes of the people of the world in their *dunyā*, then give my eye delight in Your worship."[28]

The people of this degree among those who are brought near have no worry except for what will bring them closer to the One Who loves them and Whom they love. One of the right-acting first generations said, "Action from fear may be altered by hope, but laxness never enters into action from love." There is also the words of one of them, "When idle people are fed up of their false pursuits, Your lovers will never grow weary of intimate discourse with You and Your remembrance."

Farqad as-Sabakhi said, “I read in a book, ‘Whoever loves Allah, has nothing more important to him than His love. Whoever loves the world, has nothing more important to him than self-love. The lover of Allah, exalted is He, is an amir who is given authority to command over the amirs. His group is the first group on the Day of Rising and his assembly will be the closest assembly there. Love is the ultimate limit of nearness and of struggle. Lovers will never grow weary from their long struggle for the sake of Allah ﷻ. They love Him and they love His remembrance and they make Him [and His remembrance] beloved to His creatures. They walk among people with sincere good counsel, and fear for them their actions on the Day when disgraceful matters are revealed. Those are the close friends of Allah and His beloved ones, and His chosen people. Those are the people who have no rest without meeting Him.”

Fatḥ al-Mawṣilī said, “The lover does not experience any pleasure in the dunyā, along with the love of Allah ﷻ, and he does not neglect the remembrance of Allah for the blink of an eye.”

Muḥammad ibn an-Naḍr al-Ḥārithī said, “A lover of Allah is hardly able to weary of the nearness to Allah,

exalted is He, and he is not able to turn away from that."

One of them said, "The heart of the lover of Allah flies, he has much remembrance [of Allah] which is the cause of His good pleasure, by every way possible to him of whatever means, and optional extra actions, labouring and striving, longing and longing."

One of them recited:

Be to your Lord a lover to serve Him,
Lovers are servants to their beloveds.

Another recited:

The lover has nothing other than the desire for his beloved,
The lover is submissive in every state.

One of the greatest of the optional acts with which one can draw nearer to Allah, exalted is He, is to recite the Qur'ān a great deal, and to listen to it with reflection, consideration and understanding. Khabbāb ibn al-Arat said to a man, "Draw closer to Allah as much as you are able. And know that you cannot draw closer to Him with anything more beloved to Him than His speech."

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Umāmah a *marfūʿ* hadith, “Slaves cannot draw closer to Allah with anything equal to that which comes from Him,”[29] meaning the Qur’ān. There is nothing sweeter to lovers than the speech of their Beloved, and it is the delight of their hearts, and the ultimate limit of what they seek. ʿUthmān said, “If your hearts were to be purified, you would never be satiated with the speech of your Lord.” Ibn Masʿūd said, “Whoever loves the Qur’ān, loves Allah and His Messenger.”

One of the gnostics asked a murid, “Have you memorised the Qur’ān?” He answered, “No.” He said, “Alas, I seek help from Allah! A murid who does not memorise the Qur’ān! Then howdoes he experience joy? With what will hesing in a sweet voice? With what can he hold intimate discourse with his Lord ﷻ.”

One of them used to recite the Qur’ān a great deal, and then he became too occupied with something else. One day he saw in his sleep someone saying to him:

> If you claim to love Me,
> Then why are you churlish towards My Book?
> Have you not considered what is in it,
> of My subtle reproof?

An example of that is to do a great deal of *dhikr* of Allah, with tongue and heart in accordance. There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār from Muʿādh that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, inform me of the best action and the one which is closest to Allah, exalted is He.' He answered, 'That you should die while your tongue is moist with *dhikr* of Allah, exalted is He.'"[30]

There is in the *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ says, 'I am in My slave's opinion of Me. And I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I remember him in Myself. If he remembers Me in a gathering, then I remember him in a gathering better than them.'"[31] In another hadith, "I am with My slave as long as he remembers Me and his lips move with Me."[32] He says ﷻ:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

"Remember Me – I will remember you."[33]

When the Prophet ﷺ heard those who were raising their voices with "*Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater" and "*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah" while they were with him on a journey, he said to them, "You are not calling on one who is deaf nor one who is

absent. You are calling on One Who is all-hearing and near, and He is with you." In another narration, "and He is closer to you than the necks of your mounts."[34]

[Another example] of that is love for the *awliyā'* of Allah and for His beloved ones for His sake, and hostility for His enemies for His sake. There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd from ʿUmar ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Among the slaves of Allah there are some people who are not prophets nor are they martyrs (*shuhādā'*), whom the prophets and the shuhādā' envy because of their place with Allah ﷻ." They asked, "Messenger of Allah, who are they?" He answered, "They are people who love each other in the spirit of Allah [said to mean the Qur'ān] without any kinship between them nor property which they exchange. By Allah! Their faces are light, and they are upon minbars of light, and they do not fear when people fear, nor do they feel sorrow when people sorrow." Then he recited this *āyah*:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

"Yes, the friends of Allah will feel no fear and will know no sorrow."[35] [36] The like of it is narrated in a

hadith of Abū Mālik al-Ashʿarī from the Prophet ﷺ and in his hadith there is, “The prophets envy them because of their closeness and their sitting with Allah ﷻ.”[37]

There is in the *Musnad* from ʿAmr ibn al-Jamūḥ that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The slave will not experience unequivocal *īmān* until he loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah. When he loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah, then he proves worthy of close friendship with Allah. ‘My close friends from My slaves, and My beloved ones from My creatures are the ones who are remembered by My remembrance, and I am remembered by their remembrance.’”[38]

Al-Murta’ish was asked, “By what is love attained?” He answered, “By making close friends of the close friends of Allah, and making enemies of His enemies. Its root is being in harmonious accord.”

There is in *az-Zuhd* of Imam Aḥmad that ʿAṭā’ ibn Yasār said, “Mūsā عليه السلام said, ‘My Lord, who are Your people whom You will shelter in the shade of Your Throne?’ He said, ‘They are the ones whose hands are free [from all wrong], whose hearts are pure, the ones who love each other for the sake of My majesty, the

ones who when I am remembered they are remembered along with Me, and who when they are remembered I am remembered by their remembrance, the ones who do the *wuḍū*' fully in difficult circumstances, and who turn to My remembrance as eagles turn towards their nests, and who are as devotedly attached to My love as the infant is devotedly attached to people, and who become angry when the matters I have made *ḥarām* are considered *ḥalāl*, just as the leopard becomes angry when it is enraged.'"

As for His saying, "When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps and his foot with which he walks," and in some versions, "and his heart with which he reasons, and his tongue with which he talks," what is meant by these words is that whoever exerts himself to draw closer to Allah by [performance of] the obligatory acts and moreover with optional extra acts, then He will draw him closer to Him, and make him ascend from the degree of *īmān* to the degree of *iḥsān* so that he will come to worship Allah in presence and in vigilant watchfulness as if he sees Him, and so that his heart will fill with gnosis of Allah,

exalted is He, His love, His greatness, fear of Him, awe of Him, magnification of Him, intimacy with Him, and longing for Him until this gnosis which is in his heart becomes the act of witnessing Him with inner sight as it has been said:

Dwelling in the heart, He fills it,
I do not forget Him so as to remember Him.
He is absent from my hearing and my sight,
But the dark inner core of the heart sees Him.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, “Allah says, ‘He lies who claims to love Me and who sleeps in heedlessness of Me. Does not every lover love to be alone with his beloved? Here am I overseeing My lovers and they have represented Me before their eyes and address Me in [the station of] witnessing, and they speak to Me in [My] presence. Tomorrow, I will give their eyes rest and joy in My gardens.’”

This matter that is in the hearts of the lovers who have been drawn near continues to grow stronger until it fills their hearts, so that nothing other than it remains in their hearts, and so that their limbs can only be put in motion in accordance with what is in their hearts. Whoever’s condition is like this, then

people say about him, “Nothing remains in his heart but Allah,” meaning His gnosis, His love and His remembrance. In this sense there is the well known Isrā’īlī tradition, “Allah says, ‘My heaven does not encompass me nor My earth, but the heart of My *mu’min* slave encompasses me.’” Some of the gnostics said, “Beware of Him! because He is jealous and dislikes to see other than Him in His slave’s heart.” One of them said in this same sense:

> People have no place in my heart;
> Love of You has increased in it until it is full.

Another said:

> My heart has been created according to the measure of their love,
> so there is no space in it for love of any other than them.

The Prophet ﷺ indicated this sense in his *khuṭbah* when he came to Madīnah, saying, “Love Allah with all of your hearts,” as Ibn Isḥāq mentioned in his sīrah.[39] When the heart is full of the greatness of Allah, exalted is He, that erases everything other than Him from the heart, and nothing of his self and its

desires remains for the slave nor any will except for that which his Master desires of him. Then at that point, the slave only talks in remembrance of Him, and only moves by His command. If he speaks, he speaks by Allah, and if he hears, he hears by Allah. If he looks he looks by Allah, and if he grasps he grasps by Allah. This is what is meant by His saying, "I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps and his foot with which he walks." Anyone who indicates anything other than this is only indicating the deviation of suggesting that the Divine comes to reside in a human, or [claiming] union [with the Divine], and Allah and His Messenger are both quit of him.

From this, some of the right-acting first generations, such as Sulaymān at-Taymī used to say that they did not know how to disobey Allah.[40] One of the women of the right-acting first generations gave counsel to her children saying, "Become accustomed to the love of Allah and obedience to Him, because the people of *taqwā* cling to obedience and their limbs are lonely without it. Then if the accursed one proposes an act of disobedience to them, the act of disobedience

passes them by, shrinking [from them] while they reject it."

In this same sense is the saying of ʿAlī, "We used to consider that ʿUmar's *shayṭān* was too in awe of him to tell him to do wrong actions." We have previously indicated that this is one of the special secrets of *tawḥīd*, because the meaning of *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah – is that no one other than Him is taken as a god out of love, hope, fear or obedience. So when the heart realises complete *tawḥīd*, then love for anything other than what Allah loves does not remain in it, nor dislike for anything other than what Allah dislikes. Whoever is like that, then his limbs are only motivated to action in obedience to Allah. Wrong actions only arise from love of what Allah dislikes, or dislike of what Allah loves. That arises from giving one's own desires preference overlove and fear of Allah, which is a defect in the perfection of the obligatory *tawḥīd*, so that because of that the slave becomes remiss in respect of some duties, or he does some matters which are *ḥarām*. But as for the one whose heart realises the *tawḥīd* of Allah, then the only concern he has is for the sake of Allah and for what pleases Him. It has been narrated in a *marfūʿ* hadith,

"Whoever rises in the morning and his concern is other than Allah, then he is not of Allah."[41] Imam Aḥmad narrated it in a *mawqūf* statement of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb that he said, "Whoever rises in the morning and the greater portion of his concern is other than Allah, then he is not of Allah." One of the gnostics said, "Whoever tells you that His close friend has some concern for other than Him, do not believe him."

Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā'ī used to call out at night: "Care for You has freed me from other cares, and joined me in brotherhood to vigilance. My longing to look at You is the surest of my delights, and has interposed between me and my appetites, and so I am to be found in Your prison, O Generous One."

In this same sense one of them said:

They said: "He busied himself away from us and
chose a substitute
for us, and that is the act of the traitor in
whose heart there is no love."
How could I occupy my heart away from love of
you,
without your remembrance, O you who are
all of my
occupation?

His saying, “If he asks Me I will definitely give him, and if he seeks refuge with Me I will definitely give him refuge,” and in another narration, “if he supplicates Me I will answer him and if he asks Me I will give him,” means that this beloved who has been brought near has a special station with Allah which requires that if he asks Allah for anything, He will give him it, and if he seeks refuge with Him from anything, He will give him refuge from it, and if he supplicates Him, He will answer him so that he becomes one whose supplication is answered because of his nobility with his Lord ﷻ. Many of the right-acting first generations were known for their supplication being accepted. There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that ar-Rubayyiʿ bint an-Naḍr broke a slavegirl’s tooth, and so they offered them compensation but they refused. They asked them for pardon, but they refused, and then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed judgement that there should be retaliation. Anas ibn an-Naḍr said, “Will the tooth of ar-Rubayyiʿ be broken? By the One Who sent you with the truth! her tooth will not be broken!” Then the people became contented and they accepted compensation. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“Certainly there are among the slaves of Allah those who if they swear by Allah He will fulfil it.”[42]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim from Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, “How many a weak person there is, who is regarded as weak, possessing two old worn-out garments, who if he were to adjure Allah, He would fulfil it. One of them is al-Barā’ ibn Mālik,” and that al-Barā’ met a party of the *mushrikūn*, and the Muslims said to him, “Adjure your Lord.” So he said, “I adjure You my Lord, you must direct their shoulders towards us,” and he directed their shoulders towards them. Then another time they met, and they said, “Adjure your Lord,” and he said, “I adjure You, my Lord, to direct their shoulders towards us, and to unite me with Your Prophet ﷺ,” and so they turned their shoulders towards them and al-Barā’ was killed.[43]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission that an-Nuʿmān ibn Qawqal said on the day of Uḥud, “O Allah, I adjure You that I should be killed and so enter the Garden.” He was killed, and so the Prophet ﷺ said, “An-Nuʿmān adjured Allah and He fulfilled it.”[44]

Abū Nuʿaym narrated with his chain of transmission from Saʿd that ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaḥsh said

on the day of Uḥud, “Lord! when I meet the enemy tomorrow, let me meet a man whose power is great, whose enmity is severe, whom I will fight for Your sake and who will fight me. Then let him take me and cut off my nose and ears, so that when I meet You on the morrow, You will say, ‘ʿAbdullāh! who cut off your nose and ears?’ and I will say, ‘For Your sake and for the sake of Your Messenger.’ And You will say, ‘You have told the truth.’” Saʿd said, “I saw him at the end of the day, and his nose and ears were hanging on a thread.”

Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ was someone whose supplications were answered, and a man told a lie about him, so he said, “O Allah, if he is lying, then blind his sight, lengthen his life-span and expose him to trials.” That all happened to the man, and he used to proposition[45] slave girls in the streets and would say, “An old man who has been tried; the supplication of Saʿd afflicted to me.”[46]

He supplicated against a man whom he heard abusing ʿAlī, and he had not left his place before a camel which had been startled came and trampled him with its fore and hind-legs until it had killed him.

A woman quarrelled with Saʿīd ibn Zayd about some of his land and claimed that he had taken some of her land from her. He said, “O Allah, if she is lying then blind her sight and kill her upon her land.” She became blind, and then one night while she was walking on her land she fell in a well and died.[47]

Al-ʿAlā’ ibn al-Ḥaḍramī was once in a military detachment and they became thirsty. He made the prayer and said:

اَللَّهُمَّ يَا عَلِيمُ يَا حَلِيمُ يَا عَلِيُّ يَا عَظِيمُ، إِنَّا عَبِيدُكَ وَفِي سَبِيلِكَ نُقَاتِلُ عَدُوَّكَ، فَاسْقِنَا غَيْثاً نَشْرَبُ مِنْهُ وَنَتَوَضَّأُ، وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ لأَحَدٍ فِيهِ نَصِيباً غَيْرَنَا.

“O Allah, O All-Knowing, O All-Forbearing, O Exalted, O Vast, we are Your slaves and in Your way we are fighting Your enemy. So give us some rain from which we can both drink and perform *wuḍū*’, and do not give anyone other than us a portion of it.” They travelled on a little and found a stream of rainwater gushing forth, and so they drank from it and filled up their waterskins. Then they travelled on, but one of his companions returned to the place of the river and could see nothing, and it was as if there had never been water in that place.[48]

Someone complained to Anas ibn Mālik about the extreme dryness of some of his land at Baṣra, so he performed *wuḍū'*, went out into the open and prayed two *rakʿahs*. Then he supplicated and the rain came and soaked his land, but the rain did not go outside his land except for a very little.[49]

The reed dwellings of Baṣra were burnt during the time of Abū Mūsā alAshʿarī and in the middle of them there remained one unburnt. Abū Mūsā said to the owner of the dwelling, "What is it with your dwelling that it was not burnt?" He said, "I swore an oath by my Lord that He would not burn it." Abū Mūsā said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, 'Among my community there are men whose heads are dusty and whose clothes are dirty, who if they were to swear an oath by Allah He would fulfil it.'"[50]

Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī was very well known for his supplications being answered. A gazelle would pass him and children would say to him, "Ask Allah to hold this gazelle for us," and so he would ask Allah, and He would hold the gazelle until they could take it with their hands.

He supplicated against a woman who had ruined the bond between him and his wife that her sight

would depart, and her sight departed on the spot. She came to him begging him by Allah and petitioning him, and so he felt compassion for her and asked Allah, and He returned her sight, and his wife also returned to the original state she had with him.

A man told a lie about Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh ash-Shikhkhīr and Muṭarrif said to him, “If you are lying may Allah hasten your death,” and the man died on the spot.

One of the *Khawārij* men used to come to the assembly of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī so as to surprise them and he would annoy them. When his annoyance was too much, al-Ḥasan said, “O Allah, You know the annoyance he causes us, so suffice us against him with whatever You wish,” and the man fell in a swoon on the spot, and he was carried dead on a stretcher to his family.

Ṣilah ibn Ashyam was in a military detachment and his mule went off with his baggage. The rest of the people travelled on, and he stood to pray. He said, “O Allah, I adjure You to return my mule to me with its baggage!” and it came and stood before him.

Once he was in open desert country devoid of any life, and he became hungry, so he asked Allah to feed

him. Then he heard the sound of a thump falling behind him, and suddenly there was a garment or a piece of cloth in which was a receptacle of woven palm leaves full of fresh dates. So he ate from it. The garment remained in the possession of his wife Muʿādhah al-ʿAdawiyyah who was one of the right-acting women.

Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir was on a military expedition, and one of his companions said to him, “I have an appetite for moist cheese.” Ibn al-Munkadir said, “Ask Allah for food and He will feed you, because He is the All-Powerful.” The people supplicated, and they had not travelled very far before they saw a basket of palm leaves, and there was a moist cheese! One of the people said, “If only there had been some honey!” So Ibn al-Munkadir said, “The One Who has fed you here with cheese, is able to feed you honey, so ask Him to feed you.” So they supplicated, and they had not gone very far before they found a receptacle of honey on the path, and they dismounted and ate.

It was well known that Ḥabīb al-ʿAjamī Abū Muḥammad’s supplications were answered. He supplicated on behalf of a bald-headed slave,[51] and he began to weep and then wipe his tears on the slave’s

head. The slave had not stood up before his head had blackened with hair, and he had become one of the people with the most beautiful hair.

He was brought a crippled man in a stretcher and he made a supplication for him, and the man stood up on his two legs and, carrying his stretcher on his neck, returned to his family.

During a famine he bought a great deal of food [on credit] and gave it away as *ṣadaqah* to the bereft. Then he stitched a purse and put it under his mattress. He supplicated Allah. The owners of the food came seeking payment for it, and he pulled out that purse, and it was full of dirhams. He weighed them out and they were exactly the amount due to them, and so he paid them.

A man used to make fun of him a great deal, and Ḥabīb supplicated against him and he became leprous. Once he was with Mālik ibn Dīnār and a man came and was very tough on Mālik because of some dirhams which Mālik had divided up. When it had gone on too long, Ḥabīb raised his hands towards the sky and said, "O Allah, this one has occupied us away from Your *dhikr*, so give us rest from him however You wish," and the man fell dead on his face.

Some people went out on an expedition in the way of Allah, and one of them had a donkey which died, and his companions travelled on. He stood and performed *wuḍū*' and prayed, saying, "O Allah, I have come out as a mujāhid in Your way and seeking Your good pleasure. I bear witness that You give life to the dead, and that You raise up those who are in the graves, so give life to my donkey." Then he went to his donkey and struck it and the donkey stood up shaking its ears. He mounted it and caught up with his companions. Then later he sold that donkey in Kūfa.

A small party went out in the way of Allah, and then were struck by tremendous cold which almost caused them to perish. They supplicated Allah ﷻ. By the side of them there was a great tree, and suddenly it burst into flame and they dried their clothing, warmed themselves at it until the sun rose and they departed and the tree returned to its original state.

Abū Qilābah went on Ḥajj while fasting. He went ahead of his companions on a hot summer day and was overcome by extreme thirst. He said, "O Allah, You are able to drive away my thirst without my breaking my fast," and a cloud came and shaded him, and it rained on him until his clothes were moist, and

his thirst left him. He dismounted and constructed a basin[52] and filled it up. His companions reached him and drank from it, but none of that rain had struck them.

There are very many [stories] like this which would take a great deal of time to detail. Most of those whose supplications were answered among the right-acting first generations would be patient in afflictions and would choose reward for it and would not supplicate for deliverance from it for themselves. It has been narrated that Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ used to supplicate for people because of their recognition that his supplication was answered, so someone said to him, “If only you would supplicate Allah for [the return of] your eyesight,” because it was marred, but he said, “The decree of Allah is more beloved to me than my sight.”

One of them was tried with the affliction of elephantiasis, a species of leprosy, and someone said to him, “It has reached me that you know the Greatest Name of Allah. If only you were to ask Him to remove this [affliction] that you have!” He said, “Nephew, He is the One Who has tried me, and I dislike disputing with Him.”

Someone said to Ibrāhīm at-Taymī – when he was in al-Ḥajjāj's prison – "If only you would supplicate Allah, exalted is He!" and he answered, "I dislike supplicating him to deliver me from that for which I have a reward." Similarly, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr was patient during the harm that al-Ḥajjāj caused him until he killed him, and he was one of those whose supplication was accepted. He had a cock which rose at night to crow for the prayer. One night it did not crow at its time and Saʿīd did not stand up for prayer and that was distressing for him. He asked, "What is wrong with it? May Allah remove its voice!" and the cock never crowed again after that. So his mother said to him, "Son, do not supplicate against anything after this."

A man was mentioned to Rabīʿah who had a station with Allah, and yet who would feed himself from what he found of those things people cast away on rubbish heaps. A man said, "What harm would it do this man if he asked Allah to enrich him from doing this?" Rabīʿah said, "The close friends of Allah, when He decrees something for them are not discontented with it."

Ḥaywah ibn Shurayḥ used to live an extremely constricted lifestyle. Someone said to him, “If only you would ask Allah to be expansive towards you,” and so he took a pebble from the ground and said, “O Allah make it into gold,” and it turned into unminted gold in his palm, and he said, “There is no good in the world, only in the *ākhirah*.” Then he said, “He knows best what is of benefit for His slaves.”

It is often the case that the *mu’min* whose prayer is ordinarily answered will ask for something but Allah knows that it is better for him to have something other than it, and so He may not answer his prayer, and He will give him in exchange that which is better for him either in the world or in the next world. We have previously seen in the *marfūʿ* hadith of Anas, “Allah says, ‘There are some of My slaves who seek to enter by a door of worship and I prevent them from that so that conceit doesn’t enter them.’”[53]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated the hadith of Sālim ibn Abī’l-Jaʿd from Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Among my community there are such that if he came to any of you and asked him for a dīnār he would not give it to him, and if he asked him for a dirham he would not give it to him, and if he asked him for *fulūs* [a small

copper or nickel coin] he would not give it to him, but who if he asked Allah for the Garden He would give it to him, possessing two old worn-out garments, to whom no attention is paid [by people], who if he were to swear an oath by Allah, He would fulfil it."[54] Others narrated it from Sālim as a *mursal* hadith and added, "and if he were to ask Allah for anything of the world, Allah would not give it to him, out of honour for him."

His saying, "I [Allah exalted is He] have never hesitated over anything I do as I hesitate over [taking] the soul of a *mu'min* who dislikes death, and I dislike to do ill to him," means that Allah, exalted is He, has decreed death for His slaves, as He, exalted is He, says:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

"Every self will taste death."[55] Death is the separation of the *rūḥ* from the body, and that does not happen without tremendous pain, the most tremendous pain that will happen to the slave in the world. ʿUmar said to Kaʿb, "Tell me about death." He said, "Amīr al-Mu'minīn, it is like a tree with many thorns in the inside of the son of Ādam, so there is not

a vein or joint of him except a strong-armed man is occupied with it and pulls it out," and ʿUmar wept.[56]

When the moment of death came to ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, his son asked him to describe death and he said, "By Allah! it is as if my side were in a wooden chest, and as if I were breathing through the eye of a needle, and as if a branch of thorns were being pulled from my feet to my head."

Someone asked a man on the point of death, "How do you experience yourself?" and he said, "I experience myself being seized by brute force and it is as if large daggers were striking alternately in my belly, and as if my belly were a roasting hot oven blazing furiously."

Someone said to another, "How do you experience your self?" and he answered, "I experience my self as if the heavens were piled on top of the earth on top of me, and I experience my self[57] as if it were exiting through the eye of a needle."

When death is so severe, and Allah, exalted is He, has decreed it for all of His slaves and there is no escaping it for them, and yet He, exalted is He, dislikes to harm and do ill to the *mu'min*, then that is called 'hesitation' with respect to the *mu'min*. As for the

prophets, peace be upon them, they are not taken back before they are given the choice.

Al-Ḥasan said, “Since the prophets dislike death, Allah made it seem light to them because of the meeting with Allah and with everything which they love of gifts and marks of honour so much so that the self of anyone of them is taken out from between his sides while he loves it because of how it is represented to him.”

ʿĀ’ishah said, “I do not envy anyone for whom death is made easy after that which I saw of the severity of the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”[58] She said, “There was a vessel of water with him, and he would put his hand into the vessel and then wipe his face with water, saying:

اَللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى سَكَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ

‘O Allah, aid me in the intoxications [due to the agony] of death,’ and then he began to say, ‘*lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god but Allah, certainly death has intoxications.’” It is narrated in a *mursal* hadith that he used to say:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَأْخُذُ الرُّوحَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْعَصَبِ وَالْقَصَبِ وَالْأَنَامِلِ، اَللَّهُمَّ فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهَوِّنْهُ عَلَيَّ

"O Allah, You take the *rūḥ* from in between the tendons and the bones and the fingers. O Allah, aid me in death and make it light for me."[59]

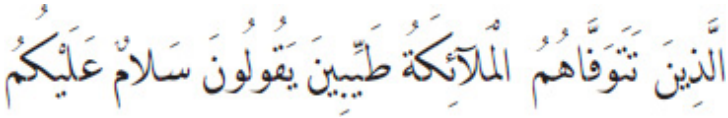
Some of the right-acting first generations used to prefer to be thrown into a state of distress at death, as ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, "I do not want the intoxications of death to be made easy for me; it is the last thing which expiates [the wrong actions] for the *mu'min*." An-Nakhaʿī said, "They used to prefer to be thrown into a state of distress at death."

Some of them used to fear that if death was made severe for them they would be tried [in *īmān*], but if Allah wishes to make death easy for His slave, He will do so. There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When death attends the *mu'min*, he will be given the good news of the pleasure of Allah and His honouring him, so that nothing will be more beloved to him than that which is before him and he will love to meet Allah, and Allah will love to meet him."[60]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "When the angel of death seizes the *mu'min's rūḥ* he says to him, 'Your Lord sends you

the greeting of peace.'"

Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb said, "The angel of death says to him, 'Peace be upon you, close friend of Allah. Allah sends you the greeting of peace.'" Then he recited:



"Those the angels take in a virtuous state. They say, 'Peace be upon you!'"[61]

Zayd ibn Aslam said, "The angels come to the *mu'min* when he is dying and say to him, 'Do not fear that to which you are going' – so Allah will drive away his fear – 'and do not grieve over the world and its people, and rejoice in the Garden,' and so he will die while the good news has come to him."

Al-Bazzār narrated in a hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah is more hesitant over the death of His slave than any of you are over the valuables among his property, so much so that He takes him in death while he is on his bed."[62]

Zayd ibn Aslam said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Allah has slaves who are people from whom harm is averted in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*.'"

Thābit al-Bunānī said, “Allah has slaves whom He tenaciously keeps away from being killed and from pain. He lengthens their life-spans, makes their provision excellent, and causes them to die on their beds and He marks them with the mark of the *shuhādā*’.”

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā and aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated as a *marfūᶜ* hadith in a number of weak ways, and in some of its wordings there is, “Allah has among His people those whom He specially cares for Himself, for whom He refuses any trials, whom He makes live in health and well-being, and whom He causes to die in well-being, and whom He enters into the Garden in well-being.”[63]

Ibn Masᶜūd and others said, “Sudden death is a lightening for the *mu’min*.” Abū Thaᶜlabah al-Khushanī used to say, “I hope that Allah does not choke me, as I see you being choked upon death.” One night he was in his home and they heard him cry out, “O ᶜAbd ar-Raḥmān!” and ᶜAbd ar-Raḥmān had been killed while with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He went to the place of prayer he had in his house and prayed, and his spirit was taken while he was in prostration.

A large number of the right-acting first generations died in prayer while they were in prostration. One of them used to say to his companions, “I will not die the way that you die, but rather I will be called and I will answer.” One day he was sitting with his companions and he said, “At Your service!” and then he fell on his face dead.

One of them was sitting with his companions and they heard a voice saying, “O so-and-so, respond! Because, by Allah! this is your last hour in the world.” He sprang up and said, “This is the summoner to death,” and he took leave of his companions, greeted them with the greeting of peace, and went off in the direction of the voice saying, “Peace be upon the messengers, and praise belongs to Allah the Lord of the worlds,” and then his voice was interrupted. They followed his footsteps and found him dead.

One of them was sitting writing in a copy of the Qur’ān, and he put down the pen from his hand and said, “If your death is like this, then by Allah! it is a pleasant death,” and then he fell over dead. Another was sitting writing hadith, and he put the pen down from his hand, raised his hands to supplicate Allah and died.

1 Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā in al-Awliyā’ (45) and Aḥmad (6:256)

2 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7880)

3 Mentioned in *Kanz al-ʿummāl* (15:43600)

4 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (6:116)

5 Ibn Mājah (3989)

6 Sūrat al-Mumtaḥanah: 1

7 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 55-56

8 At-Tirmidhī (3862)

9 Sūrat az-Zumar: 3

10 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 18

11 “And you will be classed into three: the Companions of the Right: what of the Companions of the Right? the Companions of the Left: what of the Companions of the Left? and the Forerunners, the Forerunners.” Sūrat al-Wāqiʿah 7-12

12 Sūrat al-ʿAlaq: 19

13 Muslim (482)

14 Al-Bukhārī (405)

15 At-Tirmidhī (2863)

16 Al-Bukhārī (893) and Muslim (1829)

17 Muslim (1827)

18 At-Tirmidhī (1329)

19 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 54

20 Sūrat al-Fatḥ: 29

21 Al-Bukhārī (3010)

22 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 54

23 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 54

24 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 54

25 At-Tirmidhī (3490)

26 Part of a longer hadith narrated by at-Tirmidhī (3235) and Aḥmad (5:243)

27 At-Tirmidhī (3491)

28 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:282)

29 At-Tirmidhī (2911)

30 Al-Bazzār (3059)

31 Al-Bukhārī (7505) and Muslim (2675)

32 Ibn Mājah (3792) and Aḥmad (2:540)

33 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 152

34 Al-Bukhārī (2992) and Muslim (2704)

35 Sūrah Yūnus: 62

36 Abū Dāwūd (3527)

37 Aḥmad (5:343)

38 Aḥmad (3:430)

39 As transmitted in the *Maghāzī* of Ibn Hishām.

40 i.e. they were not familiar with it and were awkward at doing it. Ed.

41 Al-Ḥākim (4:320)

42 Al-Bukhārī (6894), Muslim (1675)

43 Al-Ḥākim (3:292) and at-Tirmidhī from a different path (3854)

44 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Mujāb ad-daʿwah* (22)

45 *Yataʿ arraḍa* translated here as "proposition" can mean to "appear in front of" or "address oneself to", but in al-Bukhārī it is narrated that he used to "feel" or "pinch" the slave-girls. Trans.

46 Al-Bukhārī (755)

47 Muslim (1610)

48 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:7-8)

49 Ibn Saʿd in *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt* (7:21)

50 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *al-Awliyā'* (42)

51 *Ghulām* could be a "boy" or a "slave". Ed.

52 Or "dug a pool". Ed.

53 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:318-9)

54 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (7548)

55 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 185

56 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (5:365)

57 Possibly *nafas* "breath" rather than *nafs* "self". Trans.

58 At-Tirmidhī (979)

59 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Dhikr al-mawt*

60 Al-Bukhārī (6507)

61 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 32

62 Al-Bazzār (*Kashf*:42)

63 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *al-Awliyā'* and aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (13425)

الحديث التاسع والثلاثون

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ : ﴿إِنَّ اللهَ تَجَاوَزَ لِي عَنْ أُمَّتِي الْخَطَأَ ، وَالنِّسْيَانَ ، وَمَا اسْتُكْرِهُوا عَلَيْهِ﴾ . حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ ، رَوَاهُ ابْنُ ماجَهْ ، والبَيْهَقِيُّ ، وغَيْرُهُما .

Mistakes, Forgetfulness and Coercion

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah has passed over, for my sake, my ummah’s mistakes and forgetfulness and that which they are forced to do.” A good hadith which Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī and others narrated.

Ibn Mājah narrated this hadith by way of al-Awzāʿī from ʿAṭā’ from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ.[1] Ibn Ḥibbān narrated it, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*,[2] and adDāraquṭnī,[3] and both of them had it from al-Awzāʿī from ʿAṭā’ from ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ.

This is apparently a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain of transmission, all of whose narrators are deduced as proofs in the two

Ṣaḥīḥ books. Al-Ḥākim also narrated it and he said, “It is sound according to the stipulations of both of them [al-Bukhārī and Muslim].”[4] That is how he said it, but it has a defect, and Imam Aḥmad rejected it strenuously saying, “Nothing is related about it but that it is from al-Ḥasan from the Prophet ﷺ as a *mursal* hadith.” Someone said to Aḥmad, “Al-Walīd ibn Muslim narrates the like of it from Mālik from Nāfiʿ from Ibn ʿUmar,” and he rejected that also.

The hadith of al-Awzāʿī and Mālik were narrated to Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, and someone said to him, “Al-Walīd also narrated the like of it from Ibn Lahīʿah from Mūsā ibn Wardān from ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir from the Prophet ﷺ,” and Abū Ḥātim said, “These hadith are rejected, as if they were fabricated.” He said, “Al-Awzāʿī did not hear this hadith from ʿAṭā’, but he only heard it from a man whom he did not name, whom I suspect was ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir or Ismāʿīl ibn Muslim.” He said, “This hadith is not *ṣaḥīḥ*, and his chain of transmission is not firmly established.”

I say that it is narrated from al-Awzāʿī from ʿAṭā’ from ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr as a *mursal* hadith without mention of Ibn ʿAbbās, and Yaḥyā ibn Sālim narrated that Ibn Jurayj said, “‘ʿAṭā’ said, ‘It has reached me

that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah has passed over for my ummah mistakes and forgetfulness and that which they are forced to do.” Al-Jawzajānī narrated it[5] and this *mursal* hadith is more probable.

It is also narrated in another manner from Ibn ʿAbbās as a *marfūʿ* hadith which Muslim ibn Khālid az-Zanjī narrated from Saʿīd al-ʿAlāf that Ibn ʿAbbās said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Three things have been passed over for my ummah: mistakes, forgetfulness and that which they are forced to do.” AlJawzajānī narrated it.[6] Saʿīd al-ʿAlāf is Saʿīd ibn Abī Ṣāliḥ about whom Aḥmad said, “He was a Makkan.” Someone asked him, “How was he?” He answered, “I don’t know, but I don’t know of anyone who narrated from him other than Muslim ibn Khālid.” Aḥmad said, “This is not a *marfūʿ* hadith, but it is only some words narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās.” That is narrated from him by Muhannā and they regard Muslim ibn Khālid as weak.

It is narrated in a third fashion in a version of Baqiyyah ibn al-Walīd from ʿAlī al-Hamdānī from Abū Jamrah from Ibn ʿAbbās as a *marfūʿ* hadith which Ḥarb narrated, but the narration of Baqiyyah from his unknown shaykhs does not amount to anything.

It has been narrated in a fourth fashion which Ibn ʿAdī[7] narrated by way of ʿAbd ar-Raḥīm ibn Zayd al-ʿAmmī[8] from his father from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ but this ʿAbd ar-Raḥīm is weak.

It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in other ways, and we have seen previously that al-Walīd ibn Muslim narrated it from Mālik from Nāfiʿ from Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith, which al-Ḥākim considered sound but unusual (*gharīb*), but which according to those proficient hadith memorisers is falsely ascribed to Mālik, just as Imam Aḥmad and Abū Ḥātim rejected it. They both used to say about al-Walīd, "He makes a lot of mistakes." Abū ʿUbayd al-Ājurrī narrated that Abū Dāwūd said, "Al-Walīd ibn Muslim narrated ten hadith from Mālik all of which have no basis, of which four are from Nāfiʿ." I say that obviously this hadith is one of them, and Allah knows best.

Al-Jawzajānī narrated it in a version of Yazīd ibn Rabīʿah, "I heard al-Ashʿath narrating from Thawbān that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Allah has passed over for my ummah three things: mistakes, forgetfulness and what they are coerced into doing.'" Yazīd ibn Rabīʿah is extremely weak.[9]

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated in a version from Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī from Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Umm ad-Dardā' that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has passed over for my ummah three things: mistakes, forgetfulness and coercion." Abū Bakr said, "I mentioned that to al-Ḥasan and he said, 'Yes, of course. Do you not recite some Qur'ān about that?

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

"Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake!"[10]"" The hadith of Abū Bakr al-Hudhalī are abandoned.

Ibn Mājah narrated it, but with him it is from Shahr from Abū Dharr alGhifārī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has passed over my ummah's mistakes and their forgetfulness and that which they are forced to do," and he didn't mention the words of al-Ḥasan.[11]

As for the *mursal* hadith from al-Ḥasan, Hishām ibn Ḥassān narrated it from him, but Manṣūr and ʿAwf narrated it from al-Ḥasan as his own words and he did not ascribe it as a hadith [to the Prophet ﷺ].[12] Jaʿfar ibn Jisr ibn Farqad narrated it from his father from al-

Ḥasan from Abū Bakrah as a *marfūᶜ* hadith[13] but Jaᶜfar and his father are both weak.

Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī said, “This hadith has no chain of transmission which can be used as a proof.” Al-Bayhaqī narrated that.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Saᶜīd ibn Jubayr that Ibn ᶜAbbās said, “When His words, exalted is He, were revealed, ‘Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake!’[14] Allah said, ‘I have done so.’”[15]

There is from Al-ᶜAlā’ from his father from Abū Hurayrah that when it was revealed, He said, “Yes,”[16] but neither of them declared openly that it is a *marfūᶜ* hadith.

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated in a narration of Ibn Jurayj from ᶜAṭā’ from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah has passed over for my ummah that which their selves meditated [but they did not act upon] and that which they were coerced into doing, unless they speak by it and act by it,”[17] but this wording is unusual (*gharīb*). An-Nasā’ī narrated it but did not mention coercion.[18] Similarly, Ibn ᶜUyaynah narrated it from Misᶜar from Qatādah from Zurārah ibn Awfā from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ and he added, “And what they were coerced into doing,” which Ibn

Mājah narrated.[19] This extra wording of Ibn ʿUyaynah is rejected and no one followed him in it, and the hadith is narrated in the version of Qatādah in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books and in the *sunan* and *musnad* books without it.[20]

Let us return to commentary on the *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās. His saying, "Allah has passed over for my sake my ummah's mistakes and forgetfulness..." amounts to, "Allah has removed, for my sake, from my ummah, mistakes, and has abandoned [the reckoning of] that from them," because *tajawāza*[21] is not transitive[22].

In his saying, "mistakes and forgetfulness and that which they are forced to do"; as for mistakes and forgetfulness, the Qur'ān clearly says that they will be passed over [without reckoning]. Allah, exalted is He, says, "Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake!"[23] And:

وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِ وَلَٰكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ

"You are not to blame for any honest mistake you make but only for what your hearts premeditate."[24]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, "When the judge judges and exerts his intellect to reach a judgement and is correct, then he has two rewards. But when he judges and exerts his intellect to reach a judgement and is mistaken then he has a single reward."[25]

Al-Ḥasan said, "If it had not been for what Allah mentioned of the affair of these two men – meaning Dāwūd and Sulaymān – I would have thought that judges were already destroyed, because He praised this one [Sulaymān] for his knowledge and He excused this one [Dāwūd] for his independent exertion of the intellect to reach a judgement." He referred to His saying:

وَدَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ

"And Dāwūd and Sulaymān when they gave judgement about the field, when the people's sheep strayed into it at night."[26]

As for coercion, the Qur'ān is also clear that it is passed over. He, exalted is He, says:

مَن كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ

"Those who reject Allah after having had *īmān* – except for someone forced to do it whose heart remains at rest in its *īmān*,"[27] and He, exalted is He, says:

لَّا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَن تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً

"The *mu'minūn* should not take *kāfirūn* as friends rather than *mu'minūn*. Anyone who does that has nothing to do with Allah at all – unless it is because you are afraid of them."[28]

We will discuss this hadith in two sections: first on the ruling concerning mistakes and forgetfulness, and second the ruling concerning coercion.

FIRST SECTION: concerning mistakes and forgetfulness

Mistakes: that is that someone intends something by his action, but his action achieves something other than what he intended, for example, if someone intends to kill a *kāfir* but ends up killing a Muslim.

Forgetfulness is that someone remembers something but forgets to do it. Both are pardoned in the sense that there is no wrong action [counted

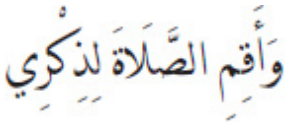
against him] in it, however removing wrong action does not conflict with [the fact that] a ruling may ensue out of his forgetfulness.

For example, when someone forgets *wuḍū*' and performs the prayer thinking that he is in *wuḍū*', then there is nothing against him for that. Later if it becomes clear to him that he had prayed while not in *wuḍū*', he must repeat the prayer.

If he forgets to mention the name of Allah at [the beginning of] the *wuḍū*' – and we [Ḥanbalīs] say that it is obligatory – then must he repeat the wuḍū'? There are two narrations on that from Imam Aḥmad.

Similarly, on forgetting to mention the name of Allah when slaughtering an animal for meat there are also two narrations, but most of the *fuqahā*' agree that the meat is to be eaten.

If someone misses a prayer from forgetfulness and then remembers, then he must perform the *qada* [in that he prays the same number of *rakʿahs* as he missed in the same manner as the prayer he missed], as he said ﷺ, "Someone who sleeps through the prayer or forgets it and later remembers it, then let him pray it when he remembers it, and there is no expiation other than that," and then he recited:



“And establish *ṣalāh* to remember Me.”[29] [30]

If someone prays a prayer while carrying dirt [such as] is not overlooked [because it is greater than the allowable amount such as an amount greater than the size of a dirham] and he then comes to know of it after his prayer or during it and he removes it, then does he repeat his prayer or not? On that there are two positions, both of which are narrated of Aḥmad. It is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he removed his sandals during his prayer and completed it, saying, “Jibrīl informed me that there was some dirt on them,” and he did not repeat his prayer.[31]

If he talked during the prayer forgetting that he was praying then there are two well known statements on the invalidity of that prayer, both of which are narrated of Aḥmad. The *madhhab* of ash-Shāfiʿī is that it does not invalidate his prayer.

If someone eats during his fast out of forgetfulness, then most say that it does not invalidate his fast, acting according to his saying ﷺ, “Someone who eats or drinks out of forgetfulness, then let him complete

his fast, because it is only that Allah fed him and gave him to drink."[32] Mālik said, "He must repeat the fast, since he is in the same position as someone who left out a prayer forgetfully." The majority say that he had the intention to fast, but he only did one of the acts which are forbidden during fasting out of forgetfulness, and so he is pardoned.

If someone had sexual intercourse forgetfully [while fasting], then is the ruling the same as the ruling on the person who eats forgetfully or not? There are two positions on that, the first of which – and it is the well known position of Aḥmad – is that his fast is invalidated by that and that he must fast another day in place of it. As to his having to make expiation [of freeing a slave, or fasting two consecutive months, or feeding sixty poor people] there are two narrations from him. The second position is that his fast is not invalidated by that, just as is the case if he had eaten, and that is the *madhhab* of ash-Shāfiʿī, and it is said to have been narrated of Aḥmad. Similarly, there is a difference about someone who has sexual intercourse while in *iḥrām* [for Ḥajj] forgetfully as to whether or not his rites are invalidated.

If someone swore an oath that he would not do something, and then did so, forgetting his oath, or mistakenly thinking that it was something other than that about which he had sworn the oath that he would not do it, then has he broken his oath or not? There are three positions all of which are related from Aḥmad:

First, he has not violated his oath in any case, even if the oath is for divorce or freeing a slave. Al-Khalāl rejected this narration from Aḥmad and said, “It was a slip by the transmitter of the statement.” This is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī, in one of his two positions, and of Isḥāq, Abū Thawr, Ibn Abī Shaybah, and it has been narrated from ʿAṭā’. Isḥāq said, “He is required to take an oath that he had forgotten the oath he had made.”

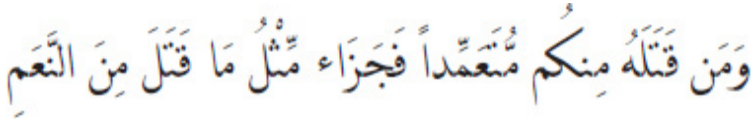
Second, he has violated his oath in every case, and that is the position of a group of the right-acting first generations and Mālik.

Third, a distinction is made between the cases where his oath was to pronounce divorce or set free a slave, and other cases. This is the well known position of Aḥmad, and the position of Abū ʿUbayd, and al-Awzāʿī spoke similarly about the case of divorce. He said, “The hadith which has been narrated about

mistakes and forgetfulness only applies as long as he continues to be forgetful, and so continues in his marriage to his wife in which case there is no wrong action against him. But then when he remembers he must separate from his wife, because his forgetfulness has ceased." Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī cited that there was consensus among the Followers that the divorce of the forgetful person takes place.

If someone killed a *mu'min* mistakenly, then he must make expiation and pay compensation since that is the clear text of the Book, and it is similar if he destroyed someone else's property by mistake thinking that it was his own property.

The dominant majority say that it is similar with someone in *iḥrām* killing hunted game by mistake or out of forgetfulness of his *iḥrām*, that he must pay the compensation for that. Some of them say that he has no compensatory payment to make unless he deliberately intended to kill it, and they do that holding to the clear outward meaning of His saying ﷻ :


وَمَن قَتَلَهُ مِنكُم مُّتَعَمِّداً فَجَزَاء مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ

“If one of you kills any deliberately, the reprisal for it is a livestock animal equivalent to what he killed.”[33] It is narrated of Aḥmad, but the majority responded to the *āyah* by saying that based on his having killed it deliberately there is both compensatory payment to be paid and vengeance [expected] of Allah, exalted is He, both of which are dependent on intentionality. If it was not deliberate, then there is no vengeance, but then there remains compensatory payment which is firmly established by another proof.

What is most obvious – and Allah knows best – is that the forgetful person and someone who has made a mistake, are pardoned in the sense that the guilt of a wrong action is removed from them, since guilt is conditional on purposes and intentions, and the person who has forgotten and the one who has made a mistake did not intend anything and so there is no guilt for them. But as for the lifting of the rulings from them, that is not what is meant by these texts, and their either being confirmed or denied needs another proof.

SECOND SECTION: on the judgement on someone who has been coerced

This is of two types:

First, someone who has absolutely no choice and no power to prevent it, such as someone who is carried against his will and made to enter a place which he swore an oath that he would not enter. Or someone who is forcibly carried and then used to strike someone else until that other person dies, and the person has no power to prevent it. Or a woman who is laid down and raped without having the power to prevent it, then there is complete agreement that all of these above cases bear no guilt, and there is no consequent violation of an oath sworn according to the dominant majority of the people of knowledge. It has been narrated of some of the right-acting first generations – such as an-Nakhaʿī – that they disagreed, and the like of that occurs in the sayings of some of ash-Shāfiʿī's and Aḥmad's companions, but their sound position is that in no case have they violated their oath.

It is narrated of al-Awzāʿī concerning a woman who swore an oath on some matter, and her husband forced her to violate it against her will that he is the one who owes her expiation, and there is a similar narration from Aḥmad, concerning if the husband had intercourse with his wife against her will when she

was fasting or in *iḥrām* that he is the one who owes her expiation. What is his well known position is that by that her fast and Ḥajj are invalidated [so she must make up the lost fast but not expiation].

The second type is in the case of someone who is coerced by being struck or by other means to do something. This action of his is connected to his personal responsibility since it was possible for him not to do it and he has a choice as to whether to do the action, however, his aim is not the action itself, but rather to repel the harm that he is suffering. So he has a choice from one point of view, but he has no choice from another point of view. For this reason people differ as to whether or not he is responsible.

The people of knowledge agree that if he is thus coerced to kill a guiltless person, he is not permitted to kill him, because he would only kill him by his own choice in order to ransom himself from being killed. This is the consensus of those people of knowledge who are to be reckoned with. There were in the time of Imam Aḥmad those who differed but who are not to be reckoned with. If he kills someone under these circumstances, then the dominant majority consider that both of them share in the obligatory retaliation,

the one who compelled him as well as the one thus compelled because of the fact that they both had a share in the murder. That is the position of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī in the well known position of his, and Aḥmad. Some say that it is only obligatory on the one who compelled the other, because the one who was forced becomes as if he were merely an instrument, and this is the verdict of Abū Ḥanīfah and one of two positions attributed to ash-Shāfiʿī. It has been narrated of Zufar as the first, and it has also been narrated of him that it [retaliation] is demanded against the one coerced [to kill] since he was the immediate cause and he is not like an instrument, because he is guilty [of murder] by unanimous agreement [of the people of knowledge]. Abū Yūsuf said, “There is no retaliation against either of them.” One of our colleagues deduced an explanation for us that does not require the killing of a group of people for one man.[34]

Even more so if he had been coerced by beating and the like to destroy the protected property of someone else, is that permitted to him? On this there are two points of view among our colleagues. If we say that is permitted to him, then the owner holds him liable for that, he will go for redress for that for which

he made him liable to the one who coerced. If we say that is not permitted to him, then the liability must be upon both of them together just as in the case with retaliation. Some said that it is only upon the person who was coerced, but that is weak.

If someone is coerced into drinking wine or something else of those actions which are forbidden, then concerning its becoming permissible because of his being coerced there are two statements:

First, that it becomes permissible to him, the proof for which is sought from His saying, exalted is He:

وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتَيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِّتَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَن يُكْرِههُّنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِن بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“Do not force your slavegirls to prostitute themselves if they desire to be virtuous women out of your desire for the goods of the *dunyā*. If anyone forces them, then after they have been forced, Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”[35] This was revealed about ʿAbdullāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl, who had two female slaves whom he forced into prostitution against their will. This deduction is that of the dominant majority such as ash-Shāfiʿī, Abū Ḥanīfah, and is the well

known position of Aḥmad, and something similar is narrated of al-Ḥasan, Makḥūl, Masrūq and from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb which indicates it.

The people who took this position differed about a man who was coerced into adulterous sexual intercourse. Some said that his being coerced is an authentic [excuse] and that he has no guilt, and that is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī, and of our colleague Ibn ʿAqīl. Some said that his being coerced is not an authentic [excuse], and that he is both guilty and due the *ḥadd* punishment, which is the position of Abū Ḥanīfah, is stated textually by Aḥmad, and is also narrated of al-Ḥasan.

The second position is that dissimulation is only [valid] in the case of words, but that there can be no dissimulation in deeds and one may not be coerced into deeds. That is narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū'l-ʿAliyyah, Abū'shShaʿthā', ar-Rabīʿ ibn Anas, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, it is one narration of Aḥmad, and it is also narrated of Ṣaḥnūn.

On the basis of this, then if he drinks wine or steals something under duress, he is punished with the hadd punishment.

On the basis of the first, if he drinks wine under duress and later divorces his wife or sets a slave free, then is the ruling on him the same as the ruling on someone who voluntarily drinks or not? Or on the contrary are his statement of divorce and his declaration of freeing the slave merely words of no consequence? Concerning that, our companions have two routes which they follow. It has been narrated of al-Ḥasan concerning someone to whom it is said, "Prostrate to the idol! If you don't we will kill you," that he said, "If the idol is towards the *qiblah*, then let him prostate, and let him make his intention that it is for the sake of Allah. If it is not towards the *qiblah*, then let him not do that even if they kill him." Ibn al-Ḥabīb al-Mālikī said, "This is a good verdict." Ibn ʿAṭiyyah said, "What prevents him from making his intention that it is for the sake of Allah even if it is not towards the *qiblah*, when there is in the Book of Allah:

فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا۟ فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ ٱللَّهِ

'So wherever you turn, the Face of Allah is there,'[36] and while in the *Sharīʿah* it is permitted for the

traveller to do optional extra *rakʿahs* while not facing in the direction of the *qiblah*?"

As for coercion into saying things, the people of knowledge are absolutely agreed that it is an authentic [excuse], and that someone who has been coerced into saying something which is not permitted, with a compulsion which is to be reckoned with, may ransom himself with it and there is no guilt on him, and the saying of Allah, exalted is He, indicates that, "except for someone forced to do it whose heart remains at rest in its *īmān*."[37] The Prophet ﷺ said to ʿAmmār, "If they return then you return!"[38] The idolaters had tortured him until he agreed with them on that *kufr* which they demanded of him, and so he did that.

As for that which is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he counselled a party of his Companions, "Do not associate partners with Allah, even if you are cut up and burnt,"[39] what is meant here is association of partners in the heart, as He says, exalted is He:

وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا

"But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, do not

obey them."[40] And He says, exalted is He:

وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ

"But as for those whose breasts become dilated with *kufr*, anger from Allah will come down on them."[41]

In all other words in which coercion could be imagined, if someone is unlawfully coerced to say some words, then no judgement can be based on them and they are vain and useless words because the words of the person coerced issued from him while he was not pleased with them, and therefore he is pardoned [and the words have no effect], and he is not taken to task for them, neither in the judgement of the world nor in the judgement of the *ākhirah*. In this the one who is forgetful and the one who is ignorant are distinguished. All contracts are the same in this respect such as sales and marriage, or cancellations such as khulʿ,[42] divorce and granting of freedom to a slave, and similarly oaths and vows. This is the position of the dominant majority of the people of knowledge, and it is the verdict of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad.

Abū Ḥanīfah made a distinction between those things which according to his view can be cancelled and for which choice is clearly established such as in sales and the like, and he said that they are not binding if there is coercion, and between those things that are not like that, such as marriage, divorce, freeing a slave and oaths which he regarded as being binding even if there was coercion.

If someone swore an oath that he would not do something and then he did it under duress, then according to the position of Abū Ḥanīfah he has breached his oath, but according to the position of the dominant majority, there are two positions on that:

First, he has not breached his oath, just as he would not have breached his oath if he was made to do that action under duress and was unable to prevent it, as we have seen previously, and this is the position of the majority of them.

Second, he has breached it here, since he did it by his own choice as opposed to the case where he was physically carried and was unable to prevent the deed, and that is one narration from Aḥmad and one position of ash-Shāfiʿī, and of his colleagues – al-Qaffāl – there are those who make a distinction between

swearing an oath to divorce and free a slave and other things, as we have said concerning the person who is forgetful, and some of our colleagues narrated that as a viewpoint (*wajhan lanā*) to us.

If someone was coerced without right to pay something, and so sold his property in order to hand over its value, then is the purchase from him sound or not? Concerning that there are two narrations from Aḥmad [both that it is sound and that it is unsound]. There is also a third narration from him that if he sold it for the value which it should realistically achieve, then it has been bought from him [and the deal is valid], but that if he sold it for less than that, then it has not been bought from him [because the deal is not valid]. Whenever the person under duress is contented with that to which he was coerced because of a subsequent desire which occurred after the coercion, and the coercion still exists, then whatever contractual matters and other things [such as oaths, and cancellations] issue from him are valid, with this intention. This is the well known position of our companions, but there is also another point of view, which is that it is not valid, but this is unlikely.

As for coercion with a right, then it does not prevent the binding nature of that which is the purpose of the coercion. If someone with whom war is being waged is coerced into Islam, and he accepts Islam, then his Islam is valid. Similarly, if a judge forces someone to sell his property to settle his debts, or someone who has made a vow to abstain from intercourse with his wife is forced to divorce her after the normal period in which abstinence is permitted and after his refusal to return [to intercourse]. If someone swears an oath not to repay a debt and the judge forces him to repay it, then he has breached his oath because he did something on which he really swore an oath in such a manner that he has no excuse. Our colleagues mention it with a difference of opinion in the case where he refused to repay a debt, but a judge paid it [from the man's property], then he has not breached his oath, because the action which he swore not to do did not issue from him.

1 Ibn Mājah (2045)

2 Ibn Ḥibbān (7219)

3 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (4:170-1)

4 Al-Ḥākim (2:198)

5 Ibn Abī Shaybah in the *Muṣannaf* (4:172)

6 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (11:133)

7 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (5:282)

8 A second edition has al-Aʿmā “the blind”. Trans.

9 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (2:97)

10 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 286

11 Ibn Mājah (2043)

12 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (6:410), Ibn Abī Shaybah (5:49), Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr in his *Sunan* (1145)

13 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (2:573), Abū Nuʿaym in *Tārīkh Aṣbahān* (1:90-91)

14 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 286

15 Muslim (126), at-Tirmidhī (2992), Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (5046)

16 Muslim (125)

17 Ad-Dāraquṭnī in his *Sunan* (4:171)

18 An-Nasā’ī in *al-Kubrā* (6:156)

19 Ibn Mājah (2044)

20 Al-Bukhārī (6919), Muslim (1716), Abū Dāwūd (3574), Ibn Mājah (2314)

21 *Tajāwaza* “passed over”. Trans.

22 It is not transitive, i.e. it does not take ‘mistakes’ and ‘forgetfulness’ as objects. Trans.

23 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 286

24 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 5

25 Al-Bukhārī (6919), Muslim (1716), Abū Dāwūd (3574), Ibn Mājah (2314)

26 Sūrat al-Anbiyā': 78

27 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 106

28 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 28

29 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 13

30 Al-Bukhārī (59) and Muslim (684)

31 Abū Dāwūd (650) and Aḥmad (3:20)

32 Al-Bukhārī (1933) and Muslim (1155)

33 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 95

34 This last sentence caused both the translator and the editor much trouble.

35 Sūrat an-Nūr: 33

36 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 114

37 Sūrat an-Naḥl : 106

38 The *mushrikūn* had continued to torture him until he said words of abuse against the Prophet ﷺ and said good things about their gods. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came, he said, 'what is beyond you?' He said, 'Evil, Messenger of Allah; I was not released until I abused you and mentioned good things about their gods.' He ﷺ said, 'How do you find your heart?' He said, 'Content with *īmān*.' He ﷺ said, 'if they return, you return (i.e. repeat what you did).' (Ibn Saʿd in his *Ṭabaqāt* (3:249)). Ed.

39 Al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (18) and Ibn Mājah (4034)

40 Sūrah Luqmān: 15

41 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 105

42 *Khulʿ* is a type of divorce in which the wife is granted the power to divorce the husband for an agreed compensation. Trans.

الحديث الأربعون

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: أَخَذَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ بِمَنْكِبَيَّ، فَقَالَ: ﴿كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ، أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ﴾، وَكَانَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ ﷺ يَقُولُ: إِذَا أَمْسَيْتَ؛ فَلا تَنْتَظِرِ الصَّبَاحَ، وَإِذَا أَصْبَحْتَ؛ فَلا تَنْتَظِرِ الْمَسَاءَ، وَخُذْ مِنْ صِحَّتِكَ لِمَرَضِكَ، وَمِنْ حَيَاتِكَ لِمَوْتِكَ. رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

Be in the World as if a Stranger

Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took hold of my shoulder and said, ‘Be in the world as if you were a stranger or someone traversing a way’.” And Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ used to say, “When you enter upon the evening, do not await the morning, and when you get up in the morning, do not await the evening, and take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death.” Al-Bukhārī (6416) narrated it.

Al-Bukhārī narrated this hadith from ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī as, “Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān aṭ-Ṭafāwī narrated to us, ‘Al-Aʿmash narrated to us, “Mujāhid

narrated to us from Ibn ʿUmar,...""" and then he mentioned [the text]. More than one of the hadith memorisers have spoken about the wording "Mujāhid narrated to us," and they said, "It is not firmly established," and they rejected it of ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī and said, "Al-Aʿmash did not hear this hadith from Mujāhid, and he heard it only from Layth ibn Abī Sulaym from him [Mujāhid]." Al-ʿUqaylī and others mentioned that. At-Tirmidhī narrated it in a hadith of Layth from Mujāhid, and in it he added, "And count yourself among the people of the grave," and he added in the words of Ibn ʿUmar, "Because you do not know, ʿAbdullāh, what your name will be tomorrow."[1] Ibn Mājah narrated it and he did not mention the saying of Ibn ʿUmar. Imam Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī narrated in a hadith of al-Awzāʿī from ʿAbdah ibn Abī Lubābah from Ibn ʿUmar that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ took hold of a part of my body and said, 'Worship Allah as if you see Him, and be in the world as if you are a stranger or someone traversing a way.'"[2] ʿAbdah ibn Abī Lubābah reached Ibn ʿUmar but people differ as to whether he heard anything from him.

This hadith is a basic source on [the need to have] little wishful thinking about the world and that the

mu'min ought not to take the world as his homeland and residence or become at rest in it, and on the contrary he should be in it as if he were on the point of departure preparing his equipment for the journey.

There is absolute agreement on that in the counsels of the prophets and their followers. He, exalted is He, quotes the *mu'min* among the people of Firʿawn as saying:

يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ

"My people! the life of the *dunyā* is only fleeting enjoyment. It is the *ākhirah* which is the abode of permanence."[3]

The Prophet ﷺ used to say, "What have I to do with the *dunyā*?[4] My likeness and the likeness of the world are like a rider who rests in the shade of a tree and then departs and leaves it."[5]

One of the counsels of the Masīḥ[6] عليه السلام to his disciples was that he said to them, "Cross it and do not inhabit it." It is narrated from him that he said, "Who is there who would build a house on the waves of the sea? That is the world for you; so do not take it as a settled dwelling."[7]

A man went to see Abū Dharr and began to look around his house. He asked, “Abū Dharr, where are your household effects?” He answered, “We have a house which we are facing to.” He said, “You can’t avoid having household effects as long as you are here.” He answered, “The Owner of the dwelling won’t leave us in it.”

They went to visit one of the right-acting people, and began to look around his house. They said to him, “We think your house is that of a man planning to travel.” He said, “Am I planning to travel? No, I am being banished.”

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ used to say, “The world is travelling away and the *ākhirah* is travelling towards us, and each of them has children, so be children of the *ākhirah* and do not be children of the world, because today is action without reckoning and tomorrow is reckoning without action.”

One of the wise people said, “I am amazed at someone from whom the world is retreating and to whom the *ākhirah* is advancing who is busy with that which is leaving and turns away from that which is approaching.”

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said in his *khuṭbah*, "The world is not the abode for you to settle in. Allah has decreed annihilation for it, and has decreed for its people departure from it. How many a strong inhabitant shortly falls to ruin, and how many a resident who is envied shortly departs. So make good your departure - may Allah show you mercy - with the best of what you have present of transport; and take travelling provision and 'the best travelling provision is *taqwā*'[8]."

Since the world is not the residence or the homeland of the *mu'min*, then the state of the *mu'min* in it should be one of two: either he should be as if he were a stranger resident in a foreign country whose concern is to gather provision for the journey back to his homeland, or he should be as if he were a traveller who is not resident at all, but who – night and day – is travelling to the land where he resides. So the Prophet ﷺ counselled Ibn ʿUmar that he should be in the world in one of these two states.

First, that the *mu'min* should make himself as if he were a stranger in the world who imagines himself to be resident but in a foreign country, and so his heart is unattached to the foreign country but on the contrary

his heart attaches itself to his homeland to which he is returning, and so he is only resident in the world to finish the repair of his equipment for the return to his homeland. Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said, "The *mu'min* in the world worries and grieves, and his concern is the repair of his equipment."

Someone who is like this while in the world, has no other concern except to gather the provisions which will benefit him on his return to his homeland, and so he does not compete with the people of the country, among whom he is a stranger, in their might, and he is not impatient due to being humble among. Al-Ḥasan said, "The *mu'min* in the world is like a stranger: he is not impatient about being humble in it and he does not compete for its precious things. He has a business, and people have another business."

When Ādam was created he was made to reside with his wife in the Garden, and then both of them were made to descend from it but they were promised that they would return to it along with their right acting descendants. Therefore the *mu'min* is always yearning for his original homeland, and "Love of one's homeland is a part of *īmān*." It is as someone said:

How many a house man has with which the youth is acquainted, whilst his eternal longing is for the very first house.

One of our shaykhs [Ibn al-Qayyim] said:

Come along to the Gardens of Eden because they areyour first dwellings and in them is the encampment.

However, we are prisoners of the enemy, so do you thinkthat we will return to our homelands and be safe?

They believe that when the stranger is removed far away and his homelands are remote, then he is impatiently eager.

What exile is more than our exile in which enemies have come to rule among us?

ʿAṭāʾ as-Sālimi used to say in his supplication, “O Allah show mercy in the world to my estrangement, and show mercy in the grave to my loneliness, and show mercy to my standing tomorrow before You.”

Al-Ḥasan said, “It has reached me that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his Companions, ‘The likeness of me and the likeness of you and the likeness of the world is like a people who travelled through a dusty waterless desert until, when they didn’t know

whether the distance they had travelled was greater than what remained, they had used up their provisions, their mounts were fatigued, and they remained in the midst of the desert without provision or mounts certain of destruction. Then while they are like that, a man came to them in a set of garments with his head dripping with water. They said, “This one is only recently come from the fresh cultivated lands, and he has only come to you from somewhere close.” When he reached them he asked, “How are you?” They answered, “As you see.” He asked, “What do you think, if I were to guide you to refreshing water and green meadows, what would you do?” They answered, “We would not disobey you in any way.” He said, “[Give me] your contracts and covenants by Allah,” and so they gave their binding contracts and covenants by Allah that they would not disobey him in any way.’ He said, ‘So he brought them to water and green meadows, and then he remained among them as long as Allah willed. Then he said, “Travellers!” They asked, “Where are you going?” He answered, “To water that is unlike your water, and to meadows that are not like your meadows.” So the chief part of them said – and they were the majority of them, “By Allah!

we did not find this until we thought that we would never find it. What could we do with a life better than this?" A party said – and they were the minority, "Have you not given this man your contracts and covenants [sworn] by Allah that you will not disobey him in anything, and he has been true to you in the first thing he said to you? By Allah! he will be true to you in the last [thing he said]." So he went off with those who followed him, and the rest of them stayed behind. An enemy learnt of them, and they found themselves either in captivity or killed.'" Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it, and Imam Aḥmad narrated it[9] in a hadith of ʿAlī ibn Zayd ibn Jadʿān from Yūsuf ibn Mihrān from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ in the same sense but abridged.

This simile matches the state of the Prophet ﷺ with his ummah, because he came to them while the Arabs then were the most abject of people, and the smallest in number of them, with the worst lifestyle in the world and the poorest states with respect to the *ākhirah*. He called them to travel the path to success and showed them the proofs of his truthfulness, as the truthfulness of the one who came to the people in the desert was clear – their water having gone, and their

mounts having perished – by their seeing him in garments, on foot, with water dripping from his head, and then he showed them where the water and fertile meadows were. So they deduced from his outward form and his state the truthfulness of what he said and followed him, and he promised those who followed him the opening [to Islam] of the lands of Persia and Byzantium, and that they would take their two treasures, but he warned them not to be dazzled and deceived by that, and against stopping at that. He told them to content themselves with a basic provision from this world, and to be serious and to strive in seeking the *ākhirah* and in preparation for it. They found that everything he promised them is true. When the world was opened up to them – as he promised them – most people became busy with collecting it and treasuring it, aspiring competitively for it. They were pleased to reside in it, and enjoyed its appetites. They gave up preparing for the *ākhirah* in preparation for which he had told them to be serious and to strive hard. A few people accepted his advice to be serious and to seek the *ākhirah* and prepare for it. This small party was successful and caught up with their Prophet in the *ākhirah* because they travelled his path in the

world and accepted his advice and obeyed his command. Most people continued in the intoxication of the world competing to have more of it. That occupied and distracted them from the *ākhirah* until death surprised them suddenly in this delusion, and they perished and were either killed or imprisoned.

How excellent is the saying of Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh ar-Rāzī, "The world is *shayṭān*'s wine: whoever becomes drunk only comes to his senses [finding himself] among the army of the dead, regretting with the losers."

The second state: that the *mu'min* regards his state in the world as if he were a traveller and not a resident at all, but that he is journeying on passing the stages of the journey until his journey reaches its destination: death. Someone who has this state in the world, only wants to obtain provisions for the journey, does not seek to increase the goods of the world. For this reason the Prophet ﷺ counselled a group of the Companions that what they took from the world should be like a traveller's provision.

Someone said to Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ, "How are you?" He answered, "What do you think of a man who

every day travels another stage on his journey to the *ākhirah*?"

Al-Ḥasan said, "You are only a collection of days. Every time a day passes, part of you has passed." He said, "Son of Ādam, you are only between two mounts which hurry you: the day hurries you to the night and the night to the day, until they surrender you to the *ākhirah*. So who is in greater peril than you, son of Ādam?" He said, "Death is knit to your brows and the world is folded up behind you."

Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā'ī said, "Night and day are only stages in which people alight, stage by stage until they reach the end of their journey. If you can send before you in each stage some provision for what is coming, then do so, because the cessation of the journey is soon, and the matter is hastier than that. So take provision for your journey, and do what you have to do of your affair, for it is as if the affair comes upon you suddenly."

One of the right-acting first generations wrote to one of his brothers, "Brother, you are made to imagine that you are resident, but on the contrary you are exerting yourself in travel, and you are being driven without flagging. Death is facing you, and the world is

folded up behind you. What has passed of your life will not return to you until the Day of Profit and Loss returns to you."

Your path in the world is that of a traveller and every traveller must have provision.

Man must carry equipment particularly if he fears the attack of a conqueror.

A wise man said, "How can anyone rejoice in the world when his day ruins his month, and his month ruins his year and his year ruins his life? How can anyone rejoice whose term of life is leading him to his end, whose life is leading him to his death?"

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ said to a man, "How long have you lived?" He answered, "Sixty years." He said, "So for sixty years you have been travelling to your Lord and you are on the verge of reaching [Him]." The man exclaimed, "We belong to Allah and to Him we are returning!" Al-Fuḍayl said, "Do you know the explanation of it [what you just said]? You are saying, 'I belong to Allah as a slave and to Him am returning.' Whoever knows that he belongs to Allah as a slave and that to Him he is returning, then let him know that he is [to be] apprehended. Whoever knows that he is [to be] apprehended then let him know that he is [to be]

questioned. Whoever knows that he is [to be] questioned, then let him prepare an answer for the question." The man asked, "What is the means to fulfill that end?" He answered, "It is simple." He asked, "What is it?" He said, "Act excellently well in what remains and you will be forgiven for what has gone before, for, if you act badly in what remains, you will be taken to task for what has gone before and what remains." About this one of them said:

A man has travelled for sixty years to a pool of water, which is certainly close to his watering place (*wird*).[10]

A wise man said, "Someone for whom nights and days are mounts, then they travel with him even if he does not travel." In this same sense someone said:

These days are only stages by which a direct summoner urges to death.

And the most astonishing thing – if you consider – is that they are stages which are being folded while the traveller is seated.

Another said:

O mercy on my self! because of a day which leads it to the army of the dead and a night that drives it

away.

Al-Ḥasan said, “Night and day swiftly continue to decrease lifespans and to bring the moment of death nearer. How unbelievable! but, they both have accompanied Nūḥ, ʿĀd, Thamūd and many generations between them; it transpired that they came to their Lord, and were shown their actions, while night and day become fresh and renewed, unwearied by that which they have passed by, prepared to give those who remain the like of that which they did to those who have passed.”

Al-Awzāʿī wrote to a brother of his, “You are surrounded on every side, so know that you are being driven every day and night, so beware of Allah and standing in His presence, and [make sure] that the last of your time should be for His sake. And peace [be upon you].”

We travel to the end of our lifespans at every moment and our days are folded up, and they are stages

I have never seen the like of death, really, as if it were when wishes outline it, it is false.

How ugly is laxness in youth, so how about it when grey hairs cover the head?

Travel from the world with a provision of *taqwā*, for your life is some days, and they are very few.

As for Ibn ʿUmar's advice it derives from this hadith which he narrated, and it comprises the extreme restriction of one's expectations, that when someone enters the evening he does not anticipate the morning, and when he enters the morning he does not anticipate the evening, but rather on the contrary he thinks that his expected term will come to him before that. More than one of the people of knowledge have explained in this fashion the meaning of *zuhd* – doing-without the world. Al-Marwadhī said, "I asked Abū ʿAbdullāh – meaning Aḥmad – 'What is this doing without the world?' He answered, 'Restricting wishful thinking: it is someone who says when he rises in the morning, "I will not see the evening."'" He said, "Sufyān said something similar." Someone asked Abū ʿAbdullāh, "What can we find to help in restricting wishful thinking?" He answered, "We do not know. It is only a divine grace."

Al-Ḥasan said, "Three people of knowledge gathered and said to one of their number, 'What do you wish for?' He answered, 'There has never been a month in which I did not think I would die.'" He said,

“His two companions said, ‘This is indeed a wish.’ Two of them said to the other, ‘What is your wish?’ He answered, ‘There has never been a week in which I did not think I would die.’” He said, “His two companions said, ‘This is indeed a wish.’ They said to the other, ‘What is your wish?’ He answered, ‘What wish has one whose self is in the hands of another?’”

Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā’ī said, “I asked ʿAṭwān ibn ʿUmar at-Tamīmī, ‘What is the [way of] restricting wishful thinking?’ He answered, ‘It is that which is between the coming and going of the breath.’ He told al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ about that and he wept and said, ‘He says that he breathes fearing that he will die before his breath ceases. ʿAṭwān was vigilant about death.’”

One of the right-acting first generations said, “I have never slept and said to myself that I would wake up from it.”

Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad used everyday to direct people, as does the person who is on the point of death, about the washing of his body and the like. He used to weep every morning and evening. His wife was asked about his weeping and she said, “He fears – by Allah! – that when he has reached the evening he will

not reach the morning, and when he reaches the morning he fears that he will not reach the evening."

When Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ intended to sleep he used to say to his family, "I entrust you in fare well to Allah, because maybe it might prove to be my fate from which I do not arise," and this was his custom when he intended to sleep.

Bakr al-Muzanī said, "If any of you are able to not pass a night without his last testament written by his head, let him do so, because one does not know whether one will pass the night among the people of the world and wake up in the morning with the people of the *ākhirah*."

When someone said to Uways, "How is time with you?" he would say, "How is time with someone who when he comes into the evening thinks that he will not see the morning, and who when he arises in the morning thinks that he will not see the evening and that he will be given the news of the Garden or the Fire?"

ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdullāh said, "Whoever counts the morrow as a part of his lifespan has not given death the true position that it has. How many a person who faces a new day does not complete it. How many a

person who hopes for the morning never reaches it. If you were really to see the decreed period of life and how it goes, you would hate wishful thinking and its deception." He used to say, "One of the most useful days to the *mu'min* in this world is that one in which he does not think that he will reach the end of it."

A woman of Makkah who was entirely devoted to worship of Allah used to say in the evening, "O self! this night is your night, and you will have no other night." In the morning she would say, "O self! this day is your day, and you will no other day," and she would strive hard.

Bakr al-Muzanī used to say, "If you want your prayer to be any use, then say, 'It is very probable that I will not pray any more prayers." This derives from that which is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "Pray the prayer of one who is taking leave [of the world]."[11]

Maʿrūf al-Karkhī said the iqāmah for the prayer and then said to a man, "Step forward and lead us in prayer." The man said, "If I lead you in this prayer, I will not lead you in any other prayer." Maʿrūf said, "Do you say to yourself that you will pray other

prayers? We seek refuge from long drawn-out wishful thinking because it prevents good action."

One of them knocked on the door of a brother of his and asked after him. Someone said to him, "He is not in the house." He asked, "When will he return?" A servant woman in the house said to him, "Someone whose person is in another's hand, then who knows when he will return?" Among the verses of Abū'l-ʿAtāhiyah there are:

I do not know, even if I hoped a whole lifetime, that maybe when I wake up in the morning, I will not see the evening.

Do you not see that in the morning of every day your life is shorter than it was yesterday?

This second verse he derived from that which is narrated from Abū'd-Dardā' and al-Ḥasan that both of them said, "Son of Ādam, you have continued in the destruction of your life-span since you fell from your mother's womb." One of the right-acting first generations recited:

We certainly rejoice in the days which we have whiled away, and every day which has passed brings us closer to the ends of our lives.

Act diligently for your own sake before death because profit and loss are only in action.

His saying, “And take from your health for your sickness, and from your life for your death,” means gain from right actions while you are healthy before ill health interposes between you and them [right actions], and during your life before death interposes between you and them. There is in a narration, “Because, slave of Allah, you do not know what your name will be tomorrow,” meaning that maybe tomorrow you will be among the dead instead of among the living.

The same sense of this counsel is narrated of the Prophet ﷺ in other ways. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are two blessings of which many people are cheated: health and free time.”[12]

There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to a man while admonishing him, “Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your senility, your health before your ill health, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before your becoming occupied, and your life before your death.”[13]

Ghunaym ibn Qays said, “We used to admonish each other in the beginning of Islam: ‘Son of Ādam, act in your free time before you become occupied, in your youth for your old age, in your health for your ill health, in your worldly life for your other-worldly life, and in your life for your death.’”

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ, “Hasten to do actions before six things: the rising of the sun from its place of setting, or the smoke, or the Dajjāl, or the beast, or the particular circumstances of any of you (death) or the business of the general mass of people (the Day of Rising).”[14]

There is in *at-Tirmidhī* from him that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Hasten to do actions before seven things: do you wait for anything but poverty which causes you to forget, or wealth which causes excessive behaviour, or sickness which corrupts you, or old age which makes you weak in judgement, or being dispatched by death, or the Dajjāl – and he is the most evil of all awaited things! – or the Hour, and the Hour is more calamitous and more bitter.”[15]

What this means is that all these things impede action and some of them pre-occupy people away from it, either in the particular circumstances of the person,

such as in his poverty and wealth, his sickness, old age and death, or some of them are universal, such as the rising of the Hour, the emergence of the Dajjāl, and similarly the unsettling trials, as is narrated in another hadith, “Hasten to do actions before trials which will be like pieces of a dark [moonless] night.”[16]

After some of these universal matters action is of no use, as He says, exalted is He:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لاَ يَنفَعُ نَفْساً إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْراً

“On the day that one of your Lord’s Signs does come, no *īmān* which a self professes will be of any use to it if it did not have *īmān* before and earn good in its *īmān*.”[17]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not arise until the sun rises from its place of setting. Then when it rises and people see it; all of them will believe. But that is when ‘no *īmān* which a self professes will be of any use to it if it did not have *īmān* before and earn good in its *īmān*.’[18]”[19]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from him that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are three things which when they emerge ‘no *īmān* which a self professes will be of any use to it if it did not have *īmān* before and earn good in its *īmān*’: the rising of the sun from its place of setting, the Dajjāl and the beast of the earth.”[20]

There is also in it from him that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Someone who turns in *tawbah* before the sun rises from its place of setting, then Allah turns to him.”[21]

There is from Abū Mūsā that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah stretches out His hand at night for the wrongdoer of the day to turn in *tawbah*, and He stretches out His hand at day for the wrongdoer of the night to turn in *tawbah*, until the sun rises from its place of setting.”[22]

Imam Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī, at-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Ṣafwān ibn ʿAssāl that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah opened a door in the direction of the west, whose width is seventy years, for turning in *tawbah*, that will not be closed until the sun rises from it.”[23]

There is in the *Musnad* from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr and Muʿāwiyah that the

Prophet ﷺ said, “Turning in *tawbah* will continue to be acceptable until the sun rises from its place of setting. Then when it rises, every heart will be sealed with what is in it and people will have had sufficient action.”[24]

It is narrated that ʿĀ’ishah said, “When the first of the signs emerge, the pens [which record actions] will be cast away, the recording [angels] will be stopped, and bodies will testify to their actions.” Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī narrated it[25] and Kathīr ibn Murrah, Yazīd ibn Shurayḥ and others of the right-acting first generations said the same: when the sun rises from its place of setting, hearts will be sealed along with that which is in them, and the recording [angels] and actions will be lifted up, and the angels will be told not to record actions. Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, “When the sun rises from its place of setting, the angels will fold up their scrolls and put down their pens.”

It is obligatory for the *mu’min* to hasten to do right actions before he cannot do them, and something interposes between him and them, whether sickness or death or he is overtaken by some of these signs along with which no action is accepted. Abū Ḥāzim said, “The merchandise of the *ākhirah* is in little demand,

and it is soon likely to become in much demand, so that neither a little nor much of it may be attained." When something interposes between a person and action, then only grief and regret over it remain to him, and he wishes to return to the state in which he could act, but wishing does not do him any good.

He, exalted is He, says:

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ وَاتَّبِعُوا أَحْسَنَ
مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَغْتَةً وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ أَن تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ
يَا حَسْرَتَى عَلَى مَا فَرَّطتُ فِي جَنبِ اللَّهِ وَإِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ السَّاخِرِينَ أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ
هَدَانِي لَكُنتُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Turn to your Lord and submit to Him before punishment comes upon you, for then you cannot be helped. Follow the best that has been sent down to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly when you are not expecting it; lest anyone should say, 'Alas for me for neglecting what Allah was due, and being one of the scoffers!' or lest they should say, 'If only Allah had guided me, I would have had *taqwā*,' or lest he should say, when he sees the punishment, 'If only I could have another chance so that I could be a good-doer!'"[26]

He, exalted is He, says:

حَتَّى إِذَا جَاء أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحاً فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

"When death comes to one of them, he says, 'My Lord, send me back again, so that perhaps I may act rightly regarding the things I failed to do!' No indeed! It is just words he utters. Before them there is an interspace until the Day they are raised up."[27]

He says ﷻ:

وَأَنفِقُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَلَن يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْساً إِذَا جَاء أَجَلُهَا

"Give from what We have provided for you before death comes to one of you and he says, 'My Lord, if only you would give me a little more time so that I can give *ṣadaqah* and be one of the *ṣāliḥūn*!' Allah will not give anyone more time, once their time has come."[28]

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Hurayrah a *marfūᶜ* hadith, "Every dying person regrets." They asked, "What is his regret?" He answered, "If he was a good-doer then he regrets that he didn't do more. If he was

an evildoer then he regrets that he hadn't sought the favour [of Allah]."[29]

Since the matter is like this then it is specifically demanded of the *mu'min* that he must take advantage of whatever remains of his life. For this reason, someone said, "What remains of the *mu'min's* life is priceless." Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said, "Every day the *mu'min* lives is booty." Bakr al-Muzanī said, "Every day which Allah makes emerge into the world says, 'Son of Ādam, gain me since you probably have no other day after me. Every night cries out, 'Son of Ādam, gain me since you probably have no other night after me.'" One of them [al-Bukhārī] said:

Gain in your free time the merit of bowing [in prayer]because maybe your death will be sudden.

How many a healthy person without illness you have seen whose robust soul left unexpectedly.

Muḥammad al-Warrāq said:

Your yesterday has passed as a just witness and it is followed by a new day.

If yesterday you did something wrong then couple it with a good deed and you will be praiseworthy.

Because if you make your day pleasing its benefit will return to you, but yesterday which has passed will never return.

Do not postpone the doing of good actions by a day to tomorrow maybe tomorrow will arrive, while you are missing.

1 At-Tirmidhī (2333)

2 Aḥmad (2:132)

3 Sūrah Ghāfir: 39

4 *Mā lī wa li'd-dunyā* may also mean "I have nothing to do with *dunyā* and *dunyā* has nothing to do with me." Trans.

5 Aḥmad (1:391) and at-Tirmidhī (2377)

6 Masīḥ "messiah": Sayyidunā ʿĪsā ﷺ. The word may be from *masaḥa* "he wiped" i.e. anointed, meaning the "anointed one" or from *sāḥa* "he went or journeyed through the land." Trans.

7 Aḥmad mentioned it in *az-Zuhd* (93)

8 See Sūrat al-Baqarah: 196

9 Aḥmad (1:267)

10 The poem may mean that man travels throughout his life to a watering place which was already close to him when he set off. Trans.

11 Aḥmad (5:412) and Ibn Mājah (4171)

12 Al-Bukhārī (6412)

13 Al-Ḥākim (4:306)

14 Muslim (1947)

15 At-Tirmidhī (2306)

16 Muslim (118) and at-Tirmidhī (2195); the hadith continues, "...a man will be a believer in the morning and a *kāfir* in the evening and believer in the evening and a *kāfir* in the morning. He will sell his *dīn* for some goods of the world." Ed.

17 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 158

18 Sūrat al-Anʿām: 158

19 Al-Bukhārī (6521), Muslim under *īmān* (157)

20 Muslim (158)

21 Muslim (2703)

22 Muslim (2759)

23 Aḥmad (4:240), at-Tirmidhī (3536), an-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* and Ibn Mājah (4070)

24 Aḥmad (1:192)

25 In *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (14246)

26 Sūrat az-Zumar: 54-58

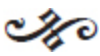
27 Sūrat al-Mu'minūn: 99-100

28 Sūrat al-Munāfiqūn: 10-11

29 At-Tirmidhī (2403)

الحديث الحادي والأربعون

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿لاَ يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبَعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ، قَالَ الشَّيْخُ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ: حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيْحٌ، رَوَيْنَاهُ فِي كِتَابِ الْحُجَّةِ بِإِسْنَادٍ صَحِيْحٍ.﴾



Desire

Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'None of you believes until his desire follows that which I have brought.'" The Shaykh said ﷺ, "A good *ṣaḥīḥ* hadith which we have narrated in the book *al-Hujjah* with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain of transmission."

He means by the author of the *Kitāb al-ḥujjah* the Shaykh Abū'l-Fatḥ Naṣr ibn Ibrāhīm al-Maqdisī the *faqīh* who abstained [from the world] and who resided in Damascus. This book of his is the *Kitāb al-ḥujjah ʿalā tārik [sulūk ṭarīq] al-maḥajjah* and comprises mention of the principles of the *dīn* on the foundations laid by the people of hadith and the Sunnah.

Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nuʿaym narrated this hadith in the book *al-Arbaʿūn* in the beginning of which he stipulated that it must comprise sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and fine traditions of those about which the hadith scholars are unanimous on the acceptability of their transmitters. The imams narrated it in their *musnad* collections. Moreover, he narrated it from aṭ-Ṭabarānī: "Abū Zayd ʿAbd arRaḥmān ibn Ḥātim al-Murādī narrated to us, 'Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād narrated to us, "'ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ath-Thaqafī narrated to us from Hishām ibn Ḥassān from Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn from ʿUqbah ibn Aws from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that he said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "None of you believes until his desire follows that with which I have come without deviating from it."'"'"[1] Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr ibn ʿĀṣim al-Aṣbahānī narrated[2] from Ibn Wārah from Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād, "'ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ath-Thaqafī narrated to us, 'One of our shaykhs – Hishām or someone else – narrated to us from Ibn Sīrīn, ...'" and then he mentioned it, but he does not have, "without deviating from it." Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā al-Madīnī said, "There is disagreement about this hadith from Nuʿaym, and it is said in it, 'One of our shaykhs narrated to us, Hishām or someone else narrated to us.'"

Regarding this hadithas sound is extremely remote for a number of reasons, of which there is that it is a hadith which only Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād al-Marwazī narrated, and although a group of imams regard this Nuʿaym as trustworthy and al-Bukhārī narrated from him, because the imams of hadith used to have a good opinion of him because of his sturdiness in terms of the Sunnah, and his stringency in refuting the people of erroneous and deviant views; but they used to ascribe to him that he used to err, and there were some ambivalences in some of his hadith. So when they too often stumbled over his disallowed [transmissions] they decided that he is weak. Ḥāfiẓ Ṣāliḥ ibn Muḥammad narrated that Ibn Maʿīn was asked about him and he said, “He is not anything, but he is a man of the Sunnah.” Ṣāliḥ said, “He used to narrate from memory, and he has many disallowed matters on which he is not supported.” Abū Dāwūd said, “Nuʿaym has around twenty hadith fromthe Prophet ﷺ which havenosource.” An-Nasā’ī said, “Weak,” and one time he said, “He is not reliable,” and another time he said, “His irregularities in many narrations against the [unanimously accepted narrations of] well-known imams have increased and

so he has become someone who is not used in a proof." Abū Zurʿah ad-Dimashqī said, "He connects hadith back [to the Prophet ﷺ]which people normally transmit as *mawqūf* statements," meaning that he transmits *mawqūf* statements as *marfūʿ* hadith. Abū ʿUrūbah al-Ḥarrānī said, "His issue is murky." Abū Saʿīd ibn Yūnus said, "He narrates hadith which are contradictory to the [narrations of] trust worthy people." Others ascribed to him that he used to fabricate hadith. And where were the [other] companions ofʿAbdal-Wahhābath-Thaqafī, the companions of Hishām ibn Ḥassān and the companions of Ibn Sīrīn with respect to this hadith so that Nuʿaym uniquely transmitted it?

Another example is that people differ about Nuʿaym's chain of transmission, so it is narrated from him from ath-Thaqafī from Hishām, while it is narrated from him from ath-Thaqafī: "One of our shaykhs, Hishām or someone else, narrated to us." According to this [second] narration then, ath-Thaqafī's shaykh is not specifically known. It is [also] narrated from him from ath-Thaqafī: "One of our shaykhs narrated to us, 'Hishām or someone else narrated to us." So then according to this narration it

was ath-Thaqafī who narrated it from an unknown shaykh, and his shaykh narrated it from an unspecified shaykh, so that the unknowns in this chain of transmission increase.

Another example is that in his chain of transmission there is ʿUqbah ibn Aws as-Sadūsī al-Baṣrī, who is also said to be Yaʿqūb ibn Aws. Abū Dāwūd, anNasā'ī, and Ibn Mājah narrate from him a hadith from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr and it is also said from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar, about which there is some inconsistency concerning his chain of transmission. Al-'Ijli, Ibn Saʿd and Ibn Ḥibbān regarded him as trustworthy. Ibn Khuzaymah said, "Ibn Sīrīn, with his high renown, narrated from him, but Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, "He is unknown."

Al-Ghalabī said in his *Tārīkh*, "They claim that he did not listen to ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr but that he only said, 'ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr said,...' and so according to this then his narration from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr has a break in it, and Allah knows best."

As for the meaning of the hadith it is that a person cannot be a *mu'min*, whose necessary *īmān* is complete, until his love follows those commands and prohibitions, etc., with which the Messenger of Allah

ﷺ came, so that he loves what he commanded and dislikes what he prohibited.

The Qur'ān states this in more than one place. He says, exalted is He:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا

"No, by your Lord, they are not *mu'minūn* until they make you their judge in the disputes that break out between them, and then find no resistance within themselves to what you decide and submit themselves completely."[3]

He says, exalted is He:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ

"When Allah and His Messenger have decided something it is not for any *mu'min* man or woman to have a choice about it."[4]

He, glorious is He, reproaches those who dislike what Allah loves, or love what Allah dislikes, when He says:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"That is because they hate what Allah has sent down, so He has made their actions come to nothing."[5] And He says, exalted is He:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

"That is because they followed what angers Allah and hated what is pleasing to Him. So He made their actions come to nothing."[6]

It is obligatory for every *mu'min* to love what Allah loves with a love which necessitates that he will do that of it which is obligatory upon him, and then if his love increases so much so that he will do that of it which He recommends then that will be additional; and that he dislike what Allah, exalted is He, dislikes with a dislike that necessitates that he will restrain himself from what is *ḥarām* for him, and if his dislike increases so much so that he restrains himself from that which He dislikes [but has not forbidden] in order to be totally safe, then that is additional. It is firmly established in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that he ﷺ said, "None of you have *īmān* until I am more beloved to

him than his self, his children, his family and all of mankind." So the *mu'min* will not be a *mu'min* until he gives preference to love of the Messenger over the love of all people, and the love of the Messenger is a necessary consequence of love of that message with which he was sent.

Authentic love necessarily requires following and being in agreement with love of beloved matters and dislike of disliked matters. He says ﷻ:

قُلْ إِن كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ

"Say: 'If your fathers or your sons or your brothers or your wives or your tribe, or any wealth you have acquired, or any business you fear may slump, or any house which pleases you, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and doing *jihād* in His Way, then wait until Allah brings about His command."[7]

He says, exalted is He:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“Say, ‘If you love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you and forgive you for your wrong actions.”[8] Al-Ḥasan said, “The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Messenger of Allah, we love our Lord with great love,’ and Allah desired to make a sign of His love and so He revealed this *āyah*.”[9]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “[There are] three [things] which whoever has them will experience the sweetness of *īmān*: that Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to him than anything else, that he loves a man only loving him for the sake of Allah, and that he dislikes to return to *kufr* after Allah had rescued him from it as much as he dislikes to be thrown in the fire.”

Whoever loves Allah and His Messenger with a love which is sincerely from his heart, that necessarily requires that he will love from his heart that which Allah and His Messenger love, and dislike what Allah and His Messenger dislike, that he will be pleased with that with which Allah and His Messenger are pleased, and displeased with that with which Allah and His Messenger are displeased, and that he will act with his limbs according to the requirements of this love and this hatred. If he does anything with his limbs that

contradicts that, and he perpetrates some of that which Allah and His Messenger dislike, or leaves out some of that which Allah and His Messenger love despite its being considered obligatory and his having the power and ability to do it, then that shows a shortcoming in that obligatory love, and he must turn in *tawbah* from that and return to completing and perfecting the love which is obligatory [upon him].

Abū Yaʿqūb an-Nahrujuri said, "Everyone who claims to love Allah ﷻ but does not agree with Allah in His command, then his claim is false. Every lover who does not fear Allah is deceived."

Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh said, "He is not truthful, who claims to love Allah ﷻ but does not guard His limits."

Ruwaym was asked about love and he said, "Being in harmonious accord in every state," and then he recited:

> If You were to say to me, "Die!" I would die
> hearing and obeying
> and I would say to the [angel] who invites to
> death, "Welcome, welcome."
> One of the earlier generations said:
> You disobey God and you claim to love Him;
> This, by my life! as a rule is foul.

If your love were true, you would obey Him;
Indeed, the lover is obedient to the One he loves.

All acts of disobedience arise from giving preference to what the self loves over what Allah and His Messenger love, and Allah describes idolaters as following their desire in many places in His Book. He says, exalted is He:

فَإِن لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ

"If they do not respond to you then know that they are merely following their whims and desires. And who could be further astray than someone who follows his whims and desires without any guidance from Allah?"[10]

Innovations are similar: they only arise from preferring whims and desires[11] over the *Sharīʿah*, and for this reason the people who do that are called "The People of Whims and Desires."

It is similar with acts of disobedience: they only occur because of giving precedence to whims and

desires over the love of Allah and love of what He loves.

It is similar with the love of individuals: what is obligatory is that it should follow that which the Messenger ﷺ came with, and so it is obligatory for the *mu'min* to love Allah and to love those whom Allah loves: the angels, Messengers, Prophets, *ṣiddīqūn, shuhadā'*, and right-acting people generally. For this reason, one of the signs of experiencing the sweetness of *īmān* is that someone loves a man only loving him for the sake of Allah. It is forbidden to take as friends the enemies of Allah and those, in general, whom Allah dislikes. We have seen that already in other places. By means of this, the entire *dīn* will become for the sake of Allah. "Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, and hates for the sake of Allah, and gives for the sake of Allah, and refuses [to give] for the sake of Allah has completed and perfected *īmān*." Whoever loves, hates, gives and withholds because of the whims, desires and loves of his self, then that is a shortcoming in his obligatory *īmān*, and he must turn in *tawbah* from that and return to following that with which the Messenger ﷺ came, which is to give preference to the love of Allah and His Messenger and

to that in which is the good pleasure of Allah and His Messenger preferring it over all loves and desires of the self.

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said, “It has reached us–and Allah knows best–that Mūsā ﷺ said, ‘Lord, advise me!’ He said, ‘I advise you about Myself,’ and He said it three times until He said the last time, ‘I advise you about Myself that whenever a matter occurs to you, you must prefer My love over everything else. Whoever does not do that, I will not purify him and I will not show him mercy.”

The well known meaning in usage of *hawā* when used without qualification is that it is to incline to something other than the truth, as in His saying ﷻ:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَى فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“and do not follow your own desires (*hawā*), letting them misguide you from the Way of Allah,”[12] and He says:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى

“But as for him who feared the Station of his Lord and forbade the lower self its inclinations, the Garden will be his refuge.”[13]

Hawā’ is also used unqualifiedly in the sense of love and inclination, so that it also comprises inclination towards the truth and other things. It may also be used in the sense of love of the truth in particular and obedience to it. Ṣafwān ibn ʿAssāl was asked, “Did you hear the Prophet ﷺ mentioning *hawā*?” and he answered, “A desert Arab asked him about a man who loves (*yuḥibbu*) a people but who has not yet reached them, and he said, ‘A man is with whomever he loves (*aḥabba*).’”[14] When His saying was revealed ﷻ:

تُرْجِي مَن تَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُؤْوِي إِلَيْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ

“You may refrain from any of them you will and keep close to you any of them you will,”[15] then ʿĀ’ishah said to the Prophet ﷺ “I only think that your Lord hastens to do that which you love (*hawāk*).”[16] ʿUmar said in the story of the counsel taken with respect to the prisoners of Badr, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved (*hawā*) what Abū Bakr said, but he did

not love what I said."[17] This hadith is one which demonstrates the usage of *hawā* in the sense of praiseworthy love, and the like of that occurs a great deal in the Isrā'īliyyāt[18] traditions. In the sayings of the shaykhs of the people (the Ṣūfīs) and their indications in their poetry and prose there is a great deal of this usage. Something that fits the sense of the hadith in that is the saying of one of them:

> Your love which is in my heart
> has made me listen and obey.
> You have taken my heart and the hidden aspect
> of my eye,
> You have robbed me of sleep and slumber.
> So leave my heart and take my sleep,
> but He said, "No, on the contrary, both of
> them together."

1 Al-Baghawī narrated it in *Sharḥ as-Sunnah* (104) with this chain using the path of Nuʿaym ibn Ḥammād.

2 In the book *as-Sunnah* (15)

3 Sūrat an-Nisā': 65

4 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 36

5 Sūrah Muḥammad: 9

6 Sūrah Muḥammad: 28

7 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 24

8 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 31

9 Aṭ-Ṭabarī in *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* (6845-6)

10 Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ: 50

11 *Ahwā*' whose singular is *hawā*' "whims and desires" is sometimes translated as love or desire. Trans.

12 Sūrah Ṣād: 26

13 Sūrat an-Nāziʿāt: 40-41

14 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (7359)

15 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 51

16 Al-Bukhārī (4788) and Muslim (1464)

17 Muslim (11763), Aḥmad (1:31) and Ibn Ḥibbān (4793)

18 *Isrā'īliyyāt* are traditions narrated by Jews and Christians who became Muslims drawing on their existing knowledge of their revealed books and their own traditions. Trans.

الحديث الثاني والأربعون

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ﷺ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! إِنَّكَ مَا دَعَوْتَنِي وَرَجَوْتَنِي؛ غَفَرْتُ لَكَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ مِنْكَ؛ وَلَا أُبَالِي، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! لَوْ بَلَغَتْ ذُنُوبُكَ عَنَانَ السَّمَاءِ، ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرْتَنِي؛ غَفَرْتُ لَكَ، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! إِنَّكَ لَوْ أَتَيْتَنِي بِقُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ خَطَايَا، ثُمَّ لَقِيتَنِي لَا تُشْرِكُ بِي شَيْئًا؛ لَأَتَيْتُكَ بِقُرَابِهَا مَغْفِرَةً﴾.

رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَقَالَ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ.

Forgiveness

Anas ﷺ said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Allah, exalted is He, said, “Son of Ādam, as long as you call on Me and hope in Me, I will forgive you whatever comes from you [of wrong actions] and I do not care. Son of Ādam, even if your wrong actions were to reach to the clouds of the sky and then you seek forgiveness of Me I will forgive you. Son of Ādam, even if you were to come to Me with nearly the earth in wrong actions, and then later you meet Me, not associating anything with Me, then I will definitely bring you nearly as much as it [the

earth] in forgiveness”.’ “At-Tirmidhī narrated it and said, “A good hadith.”[1]

At-Tirmidhī alone narrated this hadith, and he did so via Kathīr ibn Fā’id, “Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd narrated to us, ‘I heard Bakr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Muzanī saying, “Anas narrated to us,”’” and he mentioned [the text]. He said, “Good but unusual (*gharīb*) and we only know it by this route.”

There is nothing bad about his chain of transmission. Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd is al-Hunā’ī. Abū Ḥātim said, “[He is] a shaykh.” Ibn Ḥibbān mentions him in *ath-Thiqāt*. Whoever claims that he is someone other than al-Hunā’ī is deluded. Ad-Dāraquṭnī said, “Kathīr ibn Fā’id alone narrated it from Saʿīd as a *marfūʿ* hadith. Salm ibn Qutaybah narrated it from Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd but as a *mawqūf* statement of Anas.

I say that it is narrated from him both as a *marfūʿ* hadith and a *mawqūf* statement, and that Abū Saʿīd the *mawlā* of Banī Hāshim followed him in attributing it as a *marfūʿ* hadith, and he narrated it also from Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd as a *marfūʿ* hadith. He also narrated it in a hadith of Thābit from Anas as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but Abū Ḥātim said, “It is disallowed.”

It is also narrated in a hadith of Abū Dharr which Imam Aḥmad narrated in a version of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Maʿdīkarib from Abū Dharr from the Prophet ﷺ narrating from his Lord ﷻ and then he mentioned it in the same sense.[2] Some of them narrated it from Shahr from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanm from Abū Dharr, and some said, "From Shahr from Umm ad-Dardā' from Abū'd-Dardā' from the Prophet ﷺ," but this statement is not sound.

It is narrated in a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās which aṭ-Ṭabarānī[3] narrated in a version of Qays ibn ar-Rabīʿ from Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr from Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ.

Some of it is narrated in other ways. Muslim narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in a hadith of al-Ma'rur ibn Suwayd from Abū Dharr that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah, exalted is He, says, 'Whoever approaches Me by a span, I will approach him by a cubit, and whoever approaches Me by a cubit I will approach him by a fathom. Whoever comes to Me walking, I will come to him in haste. Whoever meets Me with nearly the equal of the earth [full] of wrong actions without associating anything with Me, then I will meet him with nearly the equal of it in forgiveness.'"[4]

Imam Aḥmad narrated in a version of Akhshan as-Sadūsī that he said, “I went to see Anas, and he said, ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, “By the One in Whose hand is my self, even if you were to do so many wrong actions that your wrong actions filled that which is between heaven and earth, and then later you sought forgiveness of Allah He would forgive you.”’”[5]

The hadith of Anas with which we began comprises in it that by these three means forgiveness is obtained:

First, supplication accompanied by hope, because we are commanded to supplicate and we are promised an answer, as He says, exalted is He, “Your Lord says:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

‘Call on Me and I will answer you.”[6]

There is in the four *Sunan* books from an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Supplication is *the* [act of] worship,” and then he recited this *āyah* [above].[7]

In another hadith which aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, “Whoever has been given [the ability to make] supplication, has been given the answer,

because Allah, exalted is He, says, ‘Call on Me and I will answer you.’”[8]

In another hadith, “Allah would not open the door of supplication for a slave and then close the door of response.”[9]

However, supplication is a means that requires an answer when there is complete fulfilment of its conditions and the absence of those things which negate it, and the response may be delayed because of the absence of some of its conditions or because of the presence of some of those things which prevent it. We have previously mentioned some of its conditions, those things which prevent it being answered, and some of its courtesies in commentary on the tenth hadith.

One of the most important of its conditions is the presence of the heart, and the hope for the response from Allah, exalted is He, as at-Tirmidhī narrated in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Supplicate Allah while you are certain of a response, because Allah does not accept a supplication from a forgetful distracted heart.”[10]

There is in the *Musnad* from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said, “These hearts are receptacles

and some of them are more retentive than others, so when you ask Allah, then ask Him while certain of a response, because Allah does not answer a slave's supplication from the external part of a neglectful heart."[11]

For this reason, it is forbidden for the slave to say in his supplication, "'O Allah, forgive me if You wish,' but he must resolve on the matter, because no one can coerce Allah."[12]

It is forbidden to try and hasten [the answer], or to give up supplication because the answer is thought to be slow, and that is one of the matters that prevent the response, so much so that the slave must not sever his hope in an answer to his supplication even if the period of time is very long, because He i loves those who incessantly press upon Him with supplication. It is narrated in traditions that when the slave supplicates his Lord and he loves Him, He says, "Jibrīl, do not hasten to expedite My slave's need, because I love to hear his voice." He says, exalted is He:

وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Call on Him fearfully and eagerly. Allah's mercy is close to the gooddoers."[13] As long as the slave continues incessantly to press on Him in supplication hoping for an answer without interrupting his hope, then he is close to an answer. Whoever continually knocks on the door, then it is likely that it will soon be opened for him. There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥākim* from Anas as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Do not be incapable of supplication because no one perishes with supplication."[14]

One of the most important things for the slave to ask his Lord for is the forgiveness of his wrong actions or for what necessarily requires that such as rescue from the Fire and entrance into the Garden. The Prophet ﷺ said, "About it we continually murmur,"[15] meaning "about asking for the Garden and salvation from the Fire." Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī said, "If a supplication ever occurred to me and then I remembered the Fire, I transformed it into seeking refuge from the Fire."

A part of Allah's mercy to His slave is that His slave supplicates Him about some worldly necessity so that He may avert it from him but give him in exchange something which is better for him, either averting

some evil from him by that, or storing it up for him in the *ākhirah*, or because of that forgiving him for some wrong action, as is narrated in the *Musnad* and *at-Tirmidhī* in a hadith of Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Everyone who supplicates a prayer, Allah gives him what he asks for or keeps some evil the equivalent of it away from him as long as he does not supplicate for something wrong or for severing ties of kinship."[16]

There is in the *Musnad* and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim from Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every Muslim who supplicates with a prayer in which there is nothing wrong or nothing about severing ties of kinship, then Allah will give him one of three: either He will hasten for him what he has asked for, or He will store it up for him in the *ākhirah*, or He will remove some equivalent evil from him." They said, "Then we will do more." He said, "Allah is more."[17]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it and in his version there is, "Or He will forgive him by it some wrong action which he previously did," instead of his saying, "Or He will remove from him an equivalent evil."

At-Tirmidhī also narrated in a hadith of ʿUbādah which is a *marfūʿ* hadith something like the hadith of Abū Saʿīd.[18]

In any case, incessantly pressing on Him with supplication for forgiveness along with hoping from Allah, exalted is He, necessitates forgiveness, and Allah, exalted is He, says, “I am in My slave’s opinion of Me, so let him hold whatever opinion of Me he wishes,” and in another version, “So only hold a good opinion of Allah.”

It is narrated in a hadith of Saʿīd ibn Jubayr from Ibn ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith, “Allah, exalted is He, will bring the *mu’min* on the Day of Rising and draw him near so that He will place him within His veil away from all creation, and He will say to him, ‘read [your record]’ and he will make him recognise his wrong actions one by one, ‘Do you recognise? Do you recognise?’ And he will say, ‘Yes! Yes!’ Then the slave will turn right and left, and Allah, exalted is He, will say to him, ‘There is no harm against you, O My slave, you are in My veil from all of My creation, and there is no one today between Me and you who will see your wrong actions other than Me. Go! I have forgiven you because of one single jot[19] out of everything which you brought me.’ He will say, ‘What is it, Lord?’ He will say, ‘You used not to hope for pardon from anyone other than Me.’”[20]

One of the greatest causes of forgiveness is that when the slave does a wrong action he does not hope for forgiveness from anyone other than his Lord, and he knows that no one forgives wrong actions or takes people to task for them other than Him. We have previously mentioned that in commentary on the hadith of Abū Dharr, "O My slaves, I have prohibited injustice to Myself..."[21]

His saying, "As long as you call on Me and hope in Me, I will forgive you whatever comes from you [of wrong actions] and I do not care," means no matter what the number of your wrong and bad actions, that will not become too great for Me, and I will not regard it as too much. There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If any of you supplicates then let him magnify the desire, because for Allah, nothing is too great."[22]

Even if the wrong actions of the slave are enormous, the pardon of Allah and His forgiveness are greater and more enormous than them, and they are tiny in comparison with the pardon of Allah and His forgiveness.

There is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Ḥākim from Jābir that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ saying, "Oh, the wrong

action! Oh, the wrong action!" twice or thrice, and so the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ مَغْفِرَتُكَ أَوْسَعُ مِن ذُنُوبِي وَرَحْمَتُكَ أَرْجَى عِندِي مِنْ عَمَلِي

O Allah Your forgiveness is vaster than my wrong actions, and Your mercy is more hopeful to me than my own actions." So he said it, and then he said to him, "Again!" and so he said it again, and then he said to him, "Again!" and he said it again, and he said to him, "Stand up, because Allah has forgiven you."[23] In this respect one of them (Abū Nuwās) said:

O great wrongdoer! the pardon of Allah
is greater than your wrong action.
The most enormous thing, with respect to
the pardon of Allah, is tiny.

Another (Abū Nuwās also) said:

Lord! if my wrong actions are great in number,
I certainly know that Your pardon is greater.
If only the good-doer hopes for You,
Then who does the wrongdoer hope for and
supplicate to?
I have no other means to You except for hope,

and the beauty of Your pardoning, and then
moreover,
that I am a Muslim.

The second cause of forgiveness is seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) even if the wrong actions are enormous and have reached in number to the ʿanān in the sky, which are the clouds, but some say is that part of it [the sky] where the sight ends. In the other version it is, “Even if you were to do so many wrong actions that your wrong actions were to amount to that which is between the heaven and the earth, and then later you sought forgiveness of Allah, He would forgive you.” *Istighfār* is seeking forgiveness, and forgiveness is being protected against the evil of wrong actions as well as their being veiled.

There is a great deal of mention of seeking forgiveness in the Qur’ān. Sometimes it is commanded, as in His saying, exalted is He:

وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“And ask Allah’s forgiveness. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”[24] And His saying:

وَأَنِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ

“Ask your Lord for forgiveness and then make *tawbah* to Him.”[25]

Sometimes the people who do it are praised:

وَٱلْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِٱلْأَسْحَارِ

“And those who seek forgiveness before dawn.”[26] And His saying:

وَبِٱلْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

“And they would seek forgiveness before the dawn.”[27] And His saying:

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ

“Those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions – and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?”[28]

Sometimes Allah mentions that He forgives whoever seeks His forgiveness, as in His saying, exalted is He:

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوءاً أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُوراً رَّحِيماً

"Anyone who does evil or wrongs himself and then asks Allah's forgiveness will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful."[29]

Mention of *istighfār* is very often coupled with mention of turning in *tawbah*, so that then *istighfār* is an expression denoting seeking forgiveness with the tongue, and *tawbah* is an expression denoting desisting from wrong actions with both heart and limbs.

Sometimes seeking forgiveness is mentioned alone and forgiveness is mentioned as a consequence of it, as is mentioned in this hadith and those like it, in which case it has been said that what is meant by it is seeking forgiveness coupled with turning in *tawbah*, and some say that all of the texts which mention seeking forgiveness alone and without qualification are all qualified by what is mentioned in Sūrah Āl ʿImrān[30] that is not persisting, because in it Allah promises forgiveness to whoever seeks forgiveness for his wrong actions and does not persist in the deed, so

that all of the unqualified texts concerning seeking forgiveness are interpreted to include this qualification. The plain saying, “O Allah forgive me,” is a request for forgiveness and a supplication for it, so that the ruling concerning it is the same as the ruling concerning all other supplications: if Allah wills He will answer it and forgive the supplicant, particularly if it comes from a heart broken by the wrong action or if it accords with one of the times when an answer is expected such as before the dawn or after the [obligatory] prayers.

It is narrated that Luqmān ﷺ said to his son, “Son, make your tongue accustomed to, ‘O Allah forgive me,’ because Allah has times in which He does not refuse someone who asks.”

Al-Ḥasan said, “Seek forgiveness a great deal in your homes, over your meal tables, in your pathways, in your markets, in your gatherings and wherever you are, because you do not know when forgiveness will descend.”

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated in the book *Ḥusn aẓ-ẓann* (Good Opinion) the *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Hurayrah, “While a man was lying on his back, he looked at the sky and at the stars and said:

إِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ لَكَ رَبّاً خَالِقاً ، اَللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

‘I know that you have a Creator Lord; O Allah forgive me,’ and Allah forgave him.”[31]

Muwarriq said, “A man used to do bad actions. He went out to the countryside, collected some soil and lay down on it on his back and said:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي

‘Lord, forgive me my wrong actions.’ So He said, ‘This one recognises that he has a Lord Who forgives and Who punishes,’ and so He forgave him.”

Mughīth ibn Sumayy said, “There was a rotten man, but one day he came to remember and he said:

اَللَّهُمَّ غُفْرَانَكَ ، اَللَّهُمَّ غُفْرَانَكَ ، اَللَّهُمَّ غُفْرَانَكَ .

‘O Allah, Your forgiveness! O Allah, Your forgiveness! O Allah, Your forgiveness!’ Then he died, and he was forgiven.”

Something that bears witness to this is that which is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ that, “A slave did a wrong action and said:

رَبِّ أَذْنَبْتُ ذَنْباً فَاغْفِرْ لِي

‘Lord, I have done a wrong action, so forgive me.’ Allah, exalted is He, said, ‘My slave knows that he has a Lord Who forgives wrong action and Who takes to task for it; I forgive My slave.’ Then he continued for as long as Allah willed and did another wrong action,” and he mentioned the like of the former twice. In a version of Muslim there is that He said on the third occasion, “I forgive My slave, so let him do whatever he wishes,”[32] meaning that as long as he continues in this state, every time he does a wrong action he asks forgiveness. The apparent outward meaning is that what is meant is seeking forgiveness accompanied by not persisting, and for this reason there is in the hadith of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq that the Prophet ﷺ said, “He is not persistent who seeks forgiveness, even if he returns [to his wrong action] in one day seventy times.” Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated it.[33]

As for seeking forgiveness with the tongue while persisting in one’s heart in the wrong action, it is a plain supplication which if Allah wills He will respond to and if He wills He will reject.

Persistence may be one of the matters which prevent a response. There is in the *Musnad* a *marfūʿ* hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr, “Woe to the ones who persist in what they do knowingly.”[34]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, “Someone who turns in *tawbah* from wrong action is like someone who has no wrong action, but the one who seeks forgiveness for his wrong action while continuing to do it is like someone who makes a joke of his Lord.”[35] Ascribing it as a *marfūʿ* hadith is rejected, and it is more likely to be a *mawqūf* statement.

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, “There are three who will not receive a response…” and he mentioned among them, “A man who continues to fornicate with a woman, and who whenever he has satisfied his appetite says, ‘Lord, forgive me for what I did with so-and-so [the woman].’ So the Lord says, ‘Remove yourself from her and I will forgive you. As long as you continue with her, I will not forgive you.’ And a man who has property belonging to some people whom he regards as his family, and who says, ‘Lord, forgive me for what I have consumed of so-and-so’s property,’ but He says, exalted is He, ‘Return their property to them, and I

will forgive you. As for if you do not return it to them, then I will not forgive you.'"

The saying:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

means, "I seek His forgiveness," and it is like the saying:

اَللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

"O Allah forgive me." The complete seeking of forgiveness which necessitates forgiveness is that which is coupled with not persisting in the act, as Allah praises the people who do that and promises them forgiveness. One of the gnostics said, "Someone whose seeking forgiveness does not result in correcting his *tawbah*, is lying in his seeking forgiveness." One of them used to say, "This seeking forgiveness of ours requires many acts of seeking forgiveness." In that respect one of them says:

> I seek forgiveness of Allah from [saying] I seek
> forgiveness of Allah,

with a verbal utterance which issues [from
me] whose meaning I contradict.
How could I hope for answers to supplication
while
I have with wrong action prevented its flow
from Allah.

So the best form of seeking forgiveness is that which is coupled with abandoning persistence [in wrong action], which at that point becomes a pure turning in *tawbah*. If someone says with their tongue, "I seek forgiveness of Allah," while not desisting [from the wrong] with the heart, then he is someone who is seeking forgiveness from Allah, as he says, "O Allah forgive me," which is good and the answer for which is hoped. As for someone who says, "[That is] the turning in *tawbah* of the liars," what he means is that it is not a [genuine] turning in *tawbah*, as some people believe, and this is true, because turning in *tawbah* cannot coincide with persistence [in the wrong action].

If someone says, "I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him," then he may be in one of two states:

First, that he persists in disobedience in his heart, and this one is a liar in his saying, “And I turn in *tawbah* to Him,” because he is not turning in *tawbah*, and it is not permissible for him to say about himself that he is turning in *tawbah* when he is not.

Second, that he desists from the act of disobedience with his heart, and people differ concerning the permissibility of his saying, “And I turn in *tawbah* to Him.” A party of the right-acting first generations disapprove of it, and that is the position of the companions of Abū Ḥanīfah as aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī quoted them. Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym said, “His saying, ‘And I turn in *tawbah* to Him,’ is a lie and a wrong action, but rather he should say, ‘O Allah turn to me,’ or he should say, ‘O Allah, I seek Your forgiveness, so turn to me.’” This has been interpreted to refer to someone who has not in his heart desisted, and it is more appropriate for his state. Muḥammad ibn Sūqah used to say in his seeking forgiveness:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيَّ الْقَيُّومَ وَأَسْأَلُهُ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحاً

“I seek forgiveness of Allah the Tremendous the One Whom there is no god but He, the Living, the

Eternally Self-Subsistent, and I ask Him for a pure *tawbah*."

It has been narrated of Ḥudhayfah that he said, "It is enough of a lie for a man to say, 'I seek forgiveness of Allah,' and then to repeat [the wrong action]." Muṭarrif heard a man saying, "I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him," and he became enraged at him and said, "It is very likely that you will not do it."

The outward meaning of this is that it is only disliked to say, "And I turn in *tawbah* to Him," because pure turning in *tawbah* is that one never returns to the wrong action, so that when someone returns to it he is a liar in his saying, "And I turn in *tawbah* to Him."

Similarly, Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb al-Quraẓī was asked about someone who makes a solemn covenant with Allah that he will never return to wrong action, and he said, "Who does a more serious wrong action than him? He swears by Allah that His decree for him will not be carried out." Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī regarded this statement of his as the weightiest, and the like of that is narrated of Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah.

The dominant majority of the people of knowledge regard it as permissible for the one turning in *tawbah*

to say, “I turn in *tawbah* to Allah,” and that the slave should make a solemn covenant with his Lord not to return to the act of disobedience, because the strong resolve to do that is obligatory upon him, and thus he is informing about that which he has resolved to do at that moment. For this reason he said, “He is not persistent who seeks forgiveness, even if here turns [to the wrong action] in one day seventy times.” He said about someone who repeatedly returns to the wrong action [and repeatedly seeks forgiveness], “I have forgiven My slave, so let him do what he wishes.” There is in the hadith on the expiation for an assembly:

أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

“I seek Your forgiveness, O Allah and I turn to You in *tawbah*.”[36] The Prophet ﷺ cut the hand of a thief and then said to him, “Seek forgiveness of Allah and turn in *tawbah* to Him.” So he said:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him,” and so he said, “O Allah, turn to him.” Abū Dāwūd narrated it.[37]

A group of the right-acting first generations regarded it as recommended to add something extra to, “I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him.” It is narrated of ʿUmar that he heard a man saying, “I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him,” and he said to him, “Little fool! Say,

تَوْبَةَ مَن لَّا يَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِهِ ضَرّاً وَلَا نَفْعاً وَلَا مَوْتاً وَلَا حَيَاةً وَلَا نُشُوراً

‘...with the turning in *tawbah* of someone who does not possess for himself the capacity to do harm or to benefit, to cause death nor life, nor to raise to life from the dead.’”

Al-Awzāʿī was asked about seeking forgiveness, as to whether one says:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيَّ الْقَيُّومَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek forgiveness of Allah the One Whom there is no god but He, the Living the Eternally Self-subsistent and I turn in *tawbah* to Him,” and he said, “This is good, but let him say:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

‘Lord, forgive me,’ until he completes the seeking of forgiveness.”

The best types of seeking forgiveness are that the slave should begin with praise of his Lord, and then couple that with acknowledgement of his wrong action and then ask Allah for forgiveness, as is in the hadith of Shaddād ibn Aws from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “The chief supplication of seeking forgiveness is that the slave says:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ لَكَ بِذَنْبِي، فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

‘O Allah, You are my Lord. There is no god but You. You have created me, and I am Your slave and hold to Your covenant and promise as much as I can. I seek refuge in You from the mischief of what I have done. I acknowledge Your favour to me, and I acknowledge my wrong action, so pardon me, for none pardons wrong actions but You.’” Al-Bukhārī narrated it.[38]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr that Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ said, “Messenger of Allah, teach me a supplication with which I can supplicate in my *ṣalāh*,” so he said:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ فَاغْفِرْ لِي مَغْفِرَةً مِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَارْحَمْنِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“O Allah, I have wronged myself greatly, and no one forgives wrong actions but You, so forgive me with a forgiveness from You, and show me mercy. Truly, You are the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.”[39]

One of the types of seeking forgiveness is that the slave says:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيَّ الْقَيُّومَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek forgiveness of Allah the One Whom there is no god but He, the Living the Eternally Self-subsistent and I turn in *tawbah* to Him,” and it has been narrated of the Prophet ﷺ that whoever says this is forgiven even if he had fled from encountering the enemy. Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated it.[40]

There is in the book *al-Yawm wa’l-laylah* by an-Nasā’ī from Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt that he said, “I said,

‘Messenger of Allah, how should we ask forgiveness?’ He said, ‘Say:

اَللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا ، إِنَّكَ أَنتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

“O Allah, forgive us, have mercy on us and turn to us. You are the Ever-Turning [in forgiveness], the Most Merciful.”’”[41] There is in it from Abū Hurayrah that he said, “I have never seen anyone who more often said, ‘I seek forgiveness of Allah and I turn in *tawbah* to Him,’ than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”[42]

There is in the four *Sunan* from Ibn ʿUmar that he said, “We used to count the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in one assembly saying a hundred times:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ ، إِنَّكَ أَنتَ التَّوَّابُ الْغَفُورُ

‘Lord, forgive me and turn to me. You are the Ever-Turning the AllForgiving.’”[43]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “By Allah! I certainly seek forgiveness of Allah and turn in *tawbah* to Him in a day more than seventy times.”[44]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from al-Agharr al-Muzanī that the Prophet ﷺ said, "My heart becomes covered,[45] and certainly I seek forgiveness of Allah in one day one hundred times."[46]

There is in the *Musnad* from Ḥudhayfah that he said, "I said, 'Messenger of Allah, I am sharp-tongued and most of that [happens] against my family.' So he said, 'Where are you in respect to seeking forgiveness? I certainly seek forgiveness of Allah in a day and a night one hundred times.'"[47]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd from Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever asks forgiveness of Allah a great deal, Allah will give him deliverance from every worry, and a way out of every tight spot, and provide for him from where he does not expect."[48]

Abū Hurayrah said, "Certainly, I seek forgiveness of Allah and turn in *tawbah* to Him every day one thousand times, and that is according to the measure of my compensatory payment (*diyah*)."

ʿĀ'ishah said, "Fragrant good fortune[49] to anyone who finds in the record of his actions many acts of seeking forgiveness."

Abū'l-Minhāl said, "A slave will have no neighbour more beloved to him in his grave than many acts of seeking forgiveness."

In sum, the remedy for wrong actions is seeking forgiveness, and we have narrated a *marfūʿ* hadith of Abū Dharr, "Every illness has a remedy, and the remedy for wrong actions is seeking forgiveness."[50]

Qatādah said, "This Qur'ān shows you your illness and your remedy. As for your illness, it is wrong actions. As for your remedy it is seeking forgiveness." One of them said, "The support of wrongdoers is weeping and seeking forgiveness. Someone who is worried about his wrong actions will do more acts of seeking forgiveness for them."

Riyāḥ al-Qaysī said, "I have forty or so wrong actions, for each one of which I have sought forgiveness of Allah one hundred thousand times."

One of them took himself to account for all the time since his puberty, and he found that his slips did not exceed thirty-six in number, and so he asked forgiveness of Allah one hundred thousand times for each slip, and prayed a thousand *rakʿahs* for each one in each *rakʿah* of which he recited the entire Qur'ān. He said, "Along with that I am not secure against the

punishment of my Lord that He will take me to task for them, and I am in great danger over the acceptance of the act of turning in *tawbah*."

Whoever's worry over his wrong actions increases, he often clings to someone whose wrong actions are few and asks them to ask for forgiveness for him, ʿUmar used to seek the act of seeking forgiveness [on his behalf] from children and say, "You have done no wrong action." Abū Hurayrah used to say to the children of the schools, "Say, 'O Allah, forgive Abū Hurayrah,'" because he believed in their supplication.

Bakr al-Muzanī said, "Even if a man were to go around people's doors as the bereft do, saying, 'Ask for forgiveness for me,' it would be right to do so."

Someone whose wrong and evil actions are so numerous as to be uncountable, then let him seek forgiveness of Allah for that which Allah knows, because Allah knows everything and counts it, as He says, exalted is He:

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ

"On the Day Allah raises up all of them together, He will inform them of what they did. Allah has

recorded it while they have forgotten it."[51] There is in the hadith of Shaddād ibn Aws from the Prophet ﷺ:

أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ ما تَعْلَمُ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِن شَرِّ مَا تَعْلَمُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا تَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ

"I ask You for the good which You know, and I seek refuge with You from the evil which You know. I seek forgiveness from You for what You know. Surely You are the Knower of unseen matters."[52] In this respect one of them said:

> I seek forgiveness of Allah for that which Allah knows;
> the grievous one is the one whom Allah does not show mercy.
> How forbearing is Allah towards those who are not vigilant towards Him!
> everyone is a wrongdoer, but Allah is forbearing.
> So seek forgiveness of Allah for whatever wrong actions there are;
> fragrant good fortune for whoever desists from that which Allah dislikes.

Fragrant good fortune to someone whose inner
being is good;
fragrant good fortune to someone who
refrains from what Allah forbids.

As for the third cause of forgiveness it is *tawḥīd*, and it is the greatest cause. Whoever hasn't got it will not have forgiveness, and whoever has it has the greatest means of forgiveness. He says, exalted is He:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا

"Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him but He forgives whomever He wills for anything other than that."[53] Whoever, along with his *tawḥīd*, comes with almost the whole earth – and that is its volume or approximately its volume – of wrong actions, Allah will meet him with its equivalent in forgiveness, but this is according to the will of Allah ﷻ. If He wills, He will forgive him and if He wills, He will take him to task for his wrong actions, but then his ultimate destiny is that he will not be in the Fire eternally, but on the contrary will be brought out of it and made to enter the Garden.

One of them said, “The person who has *tawḥīd* will not be cast into the Fire as are the *kuffār*, and he will not meet in it that which the *kuffār* meet, and he will not remain in it as the *kuffār* remain. Then if the slave’s *tawḥīd* is complete and his sincerity of intention is for the sake of Allah in it, and he has undertaken all of its conditions with his heart, tongue and limbs, or with his heart and his tongue at death, then that necessarily requires the forgiveness of all of whatever have passed of his wrong actions, and the prevention of his entering the Fire at all.”

Whoever’s heart realises the word of *tawḥīd*, then it will drive everything other than Allah which is loved, honoured, glorified, held in awe, feared, hoped and relied upon out of it, and at that point all his wrong actions will be burned up even if they were like the foam of the sea, and most probably will be transformed into good actions as we have seen previously about the transformation of bad actions into good actions. This *tawḥīd* is the greatest elixir, such that if even a small speck of it were placed on a mountain of wrong and bad actions it would transform them into good actions, as there is in the *Musnad* and elsewhere from Umm Hāni’ that the Prophet ﷺ said,

"*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah – will not leave a wrong action, and no action precedes it."[54]

There is in the *Musnad* from Shaddād ibn Aws and ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions, "Lift your hands and say, *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah," and we raised our hands for a while. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ lowered his hand and said, "Praise belongs to Allah. O Allah, You sent me with this phrase and ordered me with it, and promised me the Garden for it, and truly, You do not break Your promise." Then he said, "Rejoice, because Allah has forgiven you."[55]

Ash-Shiblī said, "Whoever depends on the world, it will burn him with its fire, and he will become ashes which the winds disperse. Whoever depends on the *ākhirah*, it will burn him with its light and he will become red gold by which people benefit. Whoever depends on Allah then the light of *tawḥīd* will burn him and he will become a priceless jewel."

When the fire of love becomes attached to the heart it will burn everything out of it other than the Lord ﷻ and so at that point the heart will become pure of others [than Allah], and become a fitting throne for *tawḥīd*, "My heaven does not encompass

Me, nor My earth. However, the heart of the *mu'min* slave encompasses Me."[56]

Longing for them has obstructed me with my vain talk
O my burning in love! O my burning!
Love has cast me into the depths of an ocean,
So take, by Allah! the hand of a drowning man.
Love of you has taken up residence with me in my innermost heart;
it has undone every firm covenant of mine.

This is the last of what the Shaykh [an-Nawawī] mentioned of the hadith in this book. We, by the help of Allah and by His will, mention in completion of the fifty hadith those which are comprehensive in containing types of knowledge, wisdom and courtesies, which we promised at the beginning of the book, and it is Allah Who grants success in achieving correctness.

1 At-Tirmidhī (3540)

2 Aḥmad (5:172)

3 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (12346), al-Awsāt and *aṣ-Ṣaghīr*

4 Muslim (2678)

5 Aḥmad (3:238)

6 Sūrah Ghāfir: 60

7 Abū Dāwūd (1479), at-Tirmidhī (3247) and (3372), Ibn Mājah (3828) and also an-Nasā'ī

8 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (1022)

9 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (2:735)

10 At-Tirmidhī (3479)

11 Aḥmad (2:177)

12 This sense has been narrated by al-Bukhārī (6339), and Muslim (2679)

13 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 56

14 Al-Ḥākim (1:493-4)

15 Part of a longer hadith narrated by Ibn Mājah (910) and mentioned under the commentary of hadith 29.

16 Aḥmad (3:360) and at-Tirmidhī (3381)

17 Aḥmad (3:18) and al-Ḥākim (1:493)

18 At-Tirmidhī (3573)

19 *Ḥarf*: literally "letter".

20 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī as mentioned in *Majmaʿ az-zawā'id* (7:37)

21 Hadith no. 24

22 Muslim (2679), Aḥmad (2:457) and Al-Bukhari in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (607)

23 Al-Ḥākim (1:543-4)

24 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 199

25 Sūrah Hūd: 3

26 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 17

27 Sūrat adh-Dhāriyāt: 18

28 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

29 Sūrat an-Nisā': 110

30 The verse mentioned is *āyah* 135 mentioned just earlier. The whole *āyah* is, "Those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?) and do not knowingly persist in what they were doing." Ed.

31 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *Ḥusn aẓ-ẓann* (107)

32 Al-Bukhārī (7507) and Muslim (2758)

33 Abū Dāwūd (1514) and at-Tirmidhī (3559)

34 Aḥmad (2:165)

35 Also narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-īmān* as mentioned in as-Suyūṭī's *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr*

36 At-Tirmidhī (3433) and others

37 Abū Dāwūd (4380), also narrated by an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah

38 Al-Bukhārī (6306)

39 Al-Bukhārī (834), Muslim (2705) and others

40 Abū Dāwūd (1517) and at-Tirmidhī (3577)

41 *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (461)

42 *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (454)

43 Abū Dāwūd (1516), at-Tirmidhī (3434), an-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (458) and Ibn Mājah (3814)

44 Al-Bukhārī (6307)

45 The heart becoming "covered" is the phrase the Prophet ﷺ used to refer to involuntary lapses in the remembrance of Allah

which although not a wrong action by any standard, the Prophet considered a wrong action for himself and so he sought forgiveness. Ed.

46 Muslim (2702)

47 Aḥmad (5:396-7)

48 Abū Dāwūd (1518)

49 *Ṭūbā* "fragrant good fortune" means "blessed is he". It derives from the root ṭāba "it was fragrant or good". Trans.

50 Al-Ḥākim (4:242) but as a *mawqūf* statement of Abu Dharr.

51 Sūrat al-Mujādilah: 6

52 At-Tirmidhī (3407) and Aḥmad (1:125)

53 Sūrat an-Nisā': 48

54 Ibn Mājah (3797) with these words and Aḥmad (6:425) with different wording

55 Aḥmad (4:124)

56 Aḥmad in *Kitāb az-zuhd* from Wahb ibn Munabbih as a saying of Ezekiel, "The heavens and the earth are too weak to encompass Me, and the heart of My soft calm believing slave encompasses Me."

الحديث الثالث والأربعون

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: ﴿أَلْحِقُوا الْفَرَائِضَ بِأَهْلِهَا، فَمَا أَبْقَتِ الْفَرَائِضُ؛ فَلِأَوْلَى رَجُلٍ ذَكَرٍ﴾. خَرَّجَهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Inheritance

Ibn ʿAbbās ﷺ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people, and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man.'" Al-Bukhārī (6732) and Muslim (1615) narrated it.

This is the hadith that some of the commentators on these forty hadith claim the Shaykh ﷺ left out, because it comprises rulings on inheritance and is comprehensive in that respect. This hadith they both (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) narrated in the version of Wuhayband Rawḥ ibnal-Qāsimfrom IbnṬāwusfrom his father from Ibn ʿAbbās. Muslim narrated it in the version of Ma'mar and Yaḥyā ibn Ayyūb also from Ibn Ṭāwus. Ath-Thawrī, Ibn ʿUyaynah, Ibn Jurayj and others narrated it from Ibn Ṭāwus from his father as a

mursal hadith without mentioning Ibn ʿAbbās, and an-Nasā'ī regarded it as weightier that it is a *mursal* hadith.

The people of knowledge differ as to the meaning of his saying, "Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people".

A party said that what is meant by obligatory shares (*farā'iḍ*) is those obligatory measured shares in the Book of Allah, exalted is He, meaning, "Give the obligatory measured shares to those for whom Allah specified them, and then what remains after these obligatory shares, the nearest men deserve them." The word *awlā* means the nearest, as is said, "This *yalī* this," i.e. it is near to it. The nearest man is the nearest of the paternal male relatives and he deserves the remainder because of that relationship. A group of the imams explain it in this sense, of them Imam Aḥmad and Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh, and Isḥāq ibn Manṣūr transmitted it from both of them. On this basis, if there are a daughter, a sister, a paternal uncle, or the son of a paternal uncle, or the son of a brother, then the paternal male relative ought to take the remainder after the half due to the daughter, and this is the verdict of Ibn ʿAbbās who used to hold firmly to this

hadith while admitting that everybody else disagreed with it. The Ẓāhiriyyah[1] also took this position.

Isḥāq said, “If along with the daughter and the sister there are paternal male relatives, then the male relative has more right, and if there is no one else along with the two of them [the sister and daughter], then the sister has the remainder.” It is quoted of Ibn Masʿūd that he said, “The daughter is the [equivalent of the] nearest paternal male relatives for someone who has no such male relative,” but some rejected this and said that it is not soundly ascribed to Ibn Masʿūd.

Ibn az-Zubayr and Masrūq used to give the same verdict as Ibn ʿAbbās, but then later they retracted it.

The majority of the people of knowledge took the position that a sister along with a daughter is *ʿaṣabah* [treated in the same way as the male paternal relatives], she [the sister] has whatever is left over, of whom there are ʿUmar, ʿAlī, ʿĀ’ishah, Zayd, Ibn Masʿūd, and Muʿādh ibn Jabal, and the rest of the people of knowledge follow them in that.

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrated,[2] “Ibn Jurayj informed us, ‘I asked Ibn Ṭāwus about a daughter and a sister, and he said, “My father used to mention something about it from Ibn ʿAbbās from a man from the Prophet ﷺ but

Ṭāwus was not pleased with that man." He said, "My father used to have doubts about it and would not say anything about it, even though he was asked about it."'" Apparently, and Allah knows best, what Ṭāwus meant was this hadith, because Ibn ʿAbbās had no clear text from the Prophet ﷺ concerning the inheritances of a sister and a daughter, and he only held to the like of the general implications of this hadith.

As for what Ṭāwus mentioned that Ibn ʿAbbās narrated it from a man and that he was not satisfied with that man; then most of the narrations of Ibn ʿAbbās were from the Companions, and all of the Companions are acceptable witnesses with whom Allah is pleased and He praised them, therefore no regard is due Ṭāwus' not being satisfied.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Abū'l-Qays al-Awdī that Hudhayl ibn Shuraḥbīl said, "A man came to Abū Mūsā and asked him about a daughter and a daughter of a son, and about a sister from the [same] father and mother, and he said, 'The daughter has a half, and the sister has whatever is left over. Go to Ibn Masʿūd and he will corroborate me in that.' They went to Ibn Masʿūd and mentioned that to him, and he said,

‘I would certainly have gone astray in that case [if I corroborated it] and I would not be of those who are guided. I will pass judgement on that by the judgement of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: the daughter has a half, and the daughter of the son has a sixth thus completing two-thirds. Whatever is left over is for the sister.’” He said, “So we went to Abū Mūsā and told him of what Ibn Masʿūd had said, and he said, ‘Do not ask me as long as this scholar is among you.’”[3]

There is also in it from al-Aʿmash from Ibrāhīm that al-Aswad ibn Yazīd said, “Muʿādh ibn Jabal passed judgement among us during the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that there is a half for the daughter and a half for the sister,” then later al-Aʿmash stopped mentioning that it was at the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and would not mention it.[4] Abū Dāwūd narrated it by another route from al-Aswad in which he added, “And the Prophet of Allah ﷺ was at that time alive.”[5]

Ibn ʿAbbās sought to prove his position by the saying of Allah ﷻ:

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ

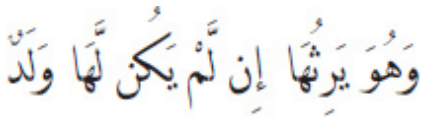
“Say: ‘Allah gives you a *fatwā* about people who die without direct heirs: If a man dies childless but has a sister she receives half of what he leaves.”[6] And he used to say, “Do you know more or Allah?” meaning that “Allah did not give her [the sister] a half except when there were no children, whereas you wish to give her a half when there are children, i.e. a daughter.”

The correct position is that of ʿUmar and the majority, and there is no indication in this *āyah* of the opposite of that because what is meant by His saying, “she receives half of what he leaves,” is obligatorily [in the form of *farāʾiḍ*], and that is predicated on the complete absence of children. For this reason He says after it:

فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ

“If there are two sisters they receive two-thirds of what he leaves,”[7] meaning obligatorily, whereas the single sister only takes a half if there are no children, male or female. Similarly, two sisters or more may only receive two-thirds if there are no children, male or female. If there is a child, and if it is a male, then

he has unqualified precedence over brethren, male or female. If there is no male child, but on the contrary a female, then the remaining amount after the obligatory shares [due to her] is due the brother along with his sister by unanimous agreement. Since the sister is not displaced by her brother, then how could she be displaced by someone who is a more remote relative from among the father's male relatives such as the uncle [the father's brother] and his [the uncle's] son? If the more remote paternal male relatives cannot displace her, then it is certain that she has precedence over him because it is prohibited for him to share with her, so what is understood from the *āyah* is that the child prevents the sister from having a half obligatorily, and this is true, and it is not understood that the sister is displaced entirely by a daughter, and she does not take what is left over from her inheritance, which is shown by His saying, exalted is He:



"and he is her heir if she dies childless."[8] The ummah agree unanimously that a female child does

not prevent a brother from inheriting from his sister what has been left after the share of the daughter or daughters, but that the presence of a female child only prevents the brother obtaining all of his sister's inheritance. So just as a child, if it is male, prevents the brother inheriting, and if it is female, does not prevent him obtaining what is left over after her inheritance although she will prevent his obtaining the entire inheritance; similarly the child, if male, prevents the sister from inheriting anything at all, but if the child is female, she prevents the sister being given a half as her obligatory share, but does not prevent her taking whatever is left over after her obligatory share, and Allah knows best.

As for his saying, "And whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man," it has been said about it that what is meant is the more distant paternal male relatives in particular, such as the sons of brothers (nephews), paternal uncles and their sons, as opposed to near paternal male relatives, the argument for which is that the remains after the obligatory shares are shared by male and female if the father's relatives are near relatives, such as children or siblings, by unanimous agreement. Similarly, the sister

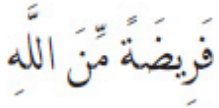
along with a daughter because of the text which shows that.

Also, these forms are singled out from it, by unanimous agreement, and similarly singled out from it is the freed female slave who is a *mawlāh* because of a favour by unanimous agreement, and so there is singled out from it the form of the sister along with a daughter textually.

Another party said that what is meant by his saying, "Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people," is that it refers to that which the owners of the obligatory shares are due in general, whether they take them as obligatory shares or by the right paternal relatives being extended to them, and that what is meant by, "and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man," refers to paternal relatives who have no obligatory share in any case. What shows that is the fact that the hadith is narrated with another wording which is, "Apportion the wealth among the people who have obligatory shares according to the Book of Allah,"[9] which comprises every person who is one of the people who receive obligatory shares in any way whatsoever. According to this, that which the sister takes along

with her brother, or the son of her paternal uncle if he renders her [the position of a male] paternal relative then it is comprised in this category because she is one of the people of the obligatory shares in general, and similarly there is that which the sister takes along with the daughter.

Another group said that what is meant by the people of the obligatory shares in his saying, “Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people,” is the sum of those whom Allah names in His Book as the people of inheritance both those who receive obligatory shares and the paternal relatives, all of them, because everything which the heirs take is an obligation which Allah has made obligatory for them, whether it is a measured portion or not, as He says after mentioning the inheritance of parents and children:



“These are obligatory shares from Allah,”[10] and there are among them both those who receive obligatory shares and male relatives of the father. And as He says, “Men receive a share of what their parents

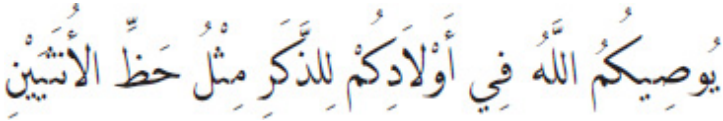
and relatives leave and women receive a share of what their parents and relatives leave, a fixed share, no matter whether it is a little or a lot," (Sūrat an-Nisā': 7) and this comprises relatives of the father and those with fixed shares. And similarly his saying, "Apportion the property among the people who have obligatory shares according to the Book of Allah," comprises its division among those with fixed shares and relatives of the father according to what is in the Book of Allah. Then if it is divided according to that and there is something still left over from it, then the nearest male heirs are singled out for the surplus. Similarly, if there is not to be found in the Book of Allah a clear statement of its division among those whom Allah names of the heirs, then the property is at that point for the nearest male man among them.

This hadith states the manner in which the aforementioned inheritances should be divided according to the Book of Allah among their people, and it explains how to divide up what is surplus of the property after this division of that which is not clearly stated in the Qur'ān concerning the states of those heirs and their portions. It also explains how to assign a share to the rest of the paternal relatives who are not

clearly named in the Qur'ān. When this hadith is joined together with the *āyāt* of the Qur'ān, all of that gives a structured understanding of the division of inheritances among all of those who receive fixed shares and those paternal relatives.

We will mention the ruling on the inheritance of children and parents as Allah mentions it in the beginning of Sūrat an-Nisā', and the ruling on the inheritances of siblings from the same parents or from the same father, as Allah mentions it in the end of the aforementioned Sūrah.

As for children, Allah, exalted is He, has said:



"Allah instructs you regarding your children: A male receives the same as the share of two females."[11] This is the ruling in the case where there are both males and females, that there is for the male of them the like of the portion of two females. That includes children and grandchildren by unanimous agreement of the people of knowledge. Therefore, when there are children, brothers and sisters, they divide the inheritance in this way according to the majority. If

there is a daughter or two from the father and there is a grandson along with his sister, then the two of them divide the remainder in thirds because of their being comprised in this general rule. This is the verdict of the majority of the people of knowledge, among them ʿUmar, ʿAlī, Zayd, and Ibn ʿAbbās, and most of the people of knowledge and the four Imams took this position.

Ibn Masʿūd took the position that all of the remainder after the father's daughters took the two-thirds in full is for the grandson, and he does not transform his sister as if she became one of the *ʿaṣabah* (paternal relatives). That is the verdict of ʿAlqamah, Abū Thawr and the people of the Ẓāhirī school, and according to them the son does not transform his sister's standing into being one of the *ʿaṣabah* (paternal relatives), unless there is already an obligatory share for her if she were single and without a brother. Similarly, they said concerning the case where there is a daughter and grandchildren through a son, both male and female, that the remainder is for all of the grandchildren and there is for the male of them the like of the portion of two females.

Ibn Masʿūd said concerning the [case of the] daughter along with the son's daughters and the son's sons, that the daughter takes a half, and the remainder is taken by the son's children such that for the male there is the like of the portion of two females unless the apportioning results in the granddaughters receiving more than a sixth because the sixth is their fixed share, and the rest is for the grandsons, and that is the verdict of Abū Thawr. As for the dominant majority, they say that the remaining half is for the children of the son and that for the male there is the like of the portion of two females in accordance with the general sense of the *āyah*. According to them even if the male child is of a lower order [than those who receive fixed shares] he transforms those of his degree into *ʿaṣabah*, whether the female has a fixed share without him or not, but he does not transform those females of a higher order than him except on condition that she would not have a fixed share without him, and he does not transform into heirs those of a lower order, in any case.

Then He, exalted is He, says:

فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ

“If there are more than two daughters they receive two-thirds of what he leaves. If she is one on her own she receives a half.”[12] This is the judgement concerning when there are female children and no males, that the single daughter receives the half, and for more than two they receive two-thirds. That comprises the father’s daughters and his son’s daughters if there are none [of the father’s daughters]. If there are both [daughters and granddaughters through the son] then if the daughters have taken fully two-thirds, then there is nothing for the granddaughters through the son if they are without brothers. If the daughters have not taken the two-thirds in full but on the contrary the father’s children amount to one single daughter along with whom there are the son’s daughters, then the daughter takes a half and the son’s daughters take one sixth thus completing the two-thirds so that the fixed share for daughters does not exceed two-thirds [of the estate]. This is how the Prophet ﷺ gave judgement in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd which we mentioned before, and it is the position of the general population of the people of knowledge apart from what is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd and Salmān ibn Rabīʿah that there is nothing for the

son's daughters, and Abū Mūsā renounced his position and returned to that of Ibn Masʿūd when his position on that reached him.

It was only the judgement on the inheritance of two daughters which proved complicated for the people of knowledge, because by consensus the two of them take two-thirds as Ibn al-Mundhir and others quoted. It is said that what is quoted concerning it from Ibn ʿAbbās that the two of them have a half is not a sound ascription, and the Qur'ān indicates the contrary when He says, "If she is one on her own she receives a half."[13] So how can more than one be made to inherit a half? The hadith of Ibn Masʿūd concerning the daughter's inheritance of a half and the son's daughter's inheritance of a sixth in completion of the sum of two-thirds shows with all the more reason that two daughters must inherit two-thirds. Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ made the two daughters of Saʿd ibn ar-Rabīʿ inherit two-thirds.[14] However, the understanding of that is difficult from the Qur'ān because of His saying, "If there are more than two daughters they receive two-thirds of what he leaves,"[15] and for this reason people became confused

about this, and many people said things which are unlikely.

Some said that the judgement on the inheritance of two daughters can be deduced from the inheritance of two sisters, because He, exalted is He, says:

فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ

"If there are two sisters they receive two-thirds of what he leaves,"[16] and that the ruling of the inheritance of more than two sisters can be inferred from the ruling on the inheritance of more than two [daughters].

Some said that a daughter [who inherits] along with her brother has a third because of the text of the Qur'ān, so for her to have a third along with her sister is more fitting. Some of them took another course, which is that Allah, exalted is He, mentions the ruling on the inheritance of a mix of male and female children, and He mentions the ruling on the inheritance of females if there are only females with no males, but He does not mention the ruling if there are males and no females. He made it that the ruling for where there are both males and females is that the

male has the like of the portion of two females, so that if along with a son there are two or more daughters then he has the like of the portion of two of them, but that if there is only one daughter along with him, then he has two-thirds and she has one third, and Allah unqualifiedly names that which the male takes as the portion of two females but the two-thirds is not the portion of two females in the case where they are gathered together with males, because the portion the two of them have then is a half, so therefore, it remains certain that two-thirds is their portion in the case where they are alone [without males].

There remains then a third category about which the Qur'ān has not made an explicit statement, which is the ruling on the case where there are only male children. This is something that is possible to see as comprised under the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās: "and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man," because this category remains and its judgement is not stated in the Qur'ān. So the property belongs to the nearest male relatives to the child, and the matter is thus, because if there were to be a son and a son's son together, then the wealth would all belong to the son, and if there were a son's son, and a

son's son's son then the wealth would all belong to the son's son according to the requirement of the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, and Allah knows best.

Then He mentions, exalted is He, the ruling on the inheritance due to parents, and He says:

وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ

"Each of his parents receives a sixth of what he leaves if he has a child."[17] This is the ruling on the inheritance due parents if the child [of theirs] who has died had a child, whether the child is male or female, and whether he is the direct offspring or the grandchild. This is like a consensus of the people of knowledge, but one of them quoted a disagreement from Mujāhid. Thus when the deceased has a child or a grandchild through the son, and he [the deceased] has two parents, then each of his parents receives a sixth as a fixed obligatory share. Then if the child is a male, the remainder after the two-sixths of the parents is his, and most probably this is comprised under his saying ﷺ, "Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people, and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man."

The nearest of a man's [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives is the son, and if the child is female and there are two or more, then they have two-thirds, and there is nothing left over of the property. If there is only one daughter then she has a half and there is one sixth left over and the father [of the deceased] takes it because of his being a male relative, and acting according to his saying ﷺ, "Make the obligatory shares of inheritance reach their people, and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man," for he is the nearest male man if there is no son, since he is closer than the brother and his son, and the paternal uncle and his son.

Then He says, exalted is He:

فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ

"If he is childless and his heirs are his parents his mother receives a third,"[18] meaning that if the deceased has no children but has both parents inheriting from him, then his mother receives a third. It is understood from it that the remainder after the third is the father's, since He affirmed that he leaves everything to his parents and He singled out the

mother to receive a third of the inheritance, so then it is known that the remainder is for the father. He did not say, “Then the father receives…” – for example – “that which the mother receives,” so that it would not be imagined that their division of the property is by their being considered [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives as with children and siblings when there are both males and females among them.

Ibn ʿAbbās used to hold firmly to this *āyah* when he delivered a verdict on the two cases known as the two ʿUmarī cases, which are: a [surviving] husband and two parents; and a [surviving] wife and two parents, because ʿUmar gave the judgement that [in both cases] the husband and the wife take their fixed share of the property and that whatever is left after their fixed shares in both cases then the mother receives a third and the remainder is for the father, and the dominant majority of the ummah followed his ruling on that.

Ibn ʿAbbās said, “On the contrary, the mother receives a full third [not a third of what the surviving spouse leaves], holding to His saying, “If he is childless and his heirs are his parents his mother receives a third.”[19]

It has been said in answer to this that Allah only gave the mother a third on two conditions: first, that her deceased child had no child; second, that the deceased child is inherited by his parents, i.e. only the two parents inherit from him, so that in the case of someone whose parents are not the only ones to inherit from him, then the mother is not due a third, even though the deceased has no child.

It is also said – and this is better – that His saying, "... and his heirs are his parents [then] his mother receives a third...," i.e. of that which both parents inherit, and He does not say, "...his mother receives a third of what he leaves," in the same way as He says about the sixth, meaning that if the deceased has no children and the parents have some inheritance from his estate, then the mother receives a third of that inheritance which is exclusively for the two parents, and the remainder is for the father. And it is because of this subtle point, and Allah knows best, that where Allah mentions the fixed shares which have definite measures for their people, He says about them "of what he leaves" or something indicating that such as His saying, "after any bequest he makes or any debts," in order to make clear that the right of a person with a

fixed share is to take that specified fixed share from all of the property [left over] after the payment of bequests and debts, and where He mentions the inheritance of the [*ʿaṣabah*] male relatives or that which males and females divide up because of their being regarded as [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives of the male, such as children and siblings, then He does not qualify it with anything of that in order to make clear that the property which is apportioned because of being a relative of a male is not all of the property, but on the contrary, sometimes it may be all of the property, and sometimes it may be what is left over after the fixed obligatory shares. Here, when He mentions the inheritance of two parents from their child who is himself without child, and in which case their division of the inheritance is not purely by fixed shares, as is the case of their inheritance when there is a child [of the deceased], nor is it purely by being [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives of the male because of which both the male and female are regarded as [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives and in which case he takes twice as much as the female takes, but on the contrary the mother takes what she takes as a fixed share, and the father takes what he takes as an [*ʿaṣabah*] relative. He says, “and [when] his heirs are

his parents his mother receives a third," meaning that of the measure which the parents are due of the inheritance the mother takes a third of it as a fixed share and the remainder the father takes because of being a relative of the male. This is a part of what Allah granted [me] by an opening, and I do not know of anyone who previously conceived it, and praise belongs to Allah.

Then He says, exalted is He:

فَإِن كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ

"If he has brothers or sisters his mother receives a sixth, after any bequest he makes or any debts,"[20] meaning that the mother receives a sixth along with the brothers and sisters from all of that which is left as inheritance which the heirs divide up, and He does not mention here the inheritance of the father along with the mother. There is no doubt that when there are a mother, brothers and sisters with no father with them, then the mother receives a sixth, and the rest is for the brothers and sisters. Two brothers or more preclude her receiving a share, according to the dominant majority.

As for when there is a father along with the mother and the brothers and sisters, most say that the father precludes the brothers and sisters and that they do not inherit. It is narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās that they inherit the sixth which they precluded the mother from receiving as a [fixed] obligatory share just as the mother's child inherits along with the mother as a [fixed] obligatory share.

It has been said that this is based on his saying, "*The kalālah*[21] is particularly whoever has no children," but it is not a condition for the person with no direct heirs that he lack a father, so the brothers and sisters inherit along with the father as obligatory [fixed] shares.

Some of the later people of knowledge said that if there are brothers and sisters who are precluded by a father, then they do not preclude the mother in any way. On the contrary, in that event she receives a third. Imam Abū'l-ʿAbbās ibn Taymiyyah regarded that as the weightiest view ﷺ and it is derived from the general sense of the statement of ʿUmar and others of the right-acting first generations, "Whoever does not inherit, does not preclude [someone else from inheriting]." Aḥmad and al-Khiraqi said the like of it.

However, most of the people of knowledge interpret that to refer to whoever has no right to inherit at all, such as a *kāfir* and a slave, and not those who do not inherit because of being precluded by someone who is a closer relative than them, and Allah knows best.

Something that testifies to the truth of the statement that when the brothers and sisters are precluded they do not then preclude the mother [from inheriting] is that Allah, exalted is He, says, "If he has brothers or sisters his mother receives a sixth,"[22] and He does not mention the father. It shows that is the judgement when the mother alone is alive with the brothers and sisters, so that all of the remainder after the sixth is for them, but this is weak, because the brothers and sisters could be from [the same] mother, but there might be nothing for them other than the third, and Allah, exalted is He, knows best.

Know that Allah, exalted is He, mentions the ruling on the parents' inheritance, but He does not mention the grandfather and grandmother. As for the grandmother, Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq and ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said "There is nothing in the Book of Allah for her," and some of the people of knowledge quote that there is a consensus on that, and that her fixed

share is only established by the Sunnah. Some said, “The sixth is a grant which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ assigned to her and it is not an obligatory share.” Thus it is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd and Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab.

It is narrated of Ibn ʿAbbās, in ways in which there is some weakness, that she is of the same status as the mother and in the case where there is no mother she inherits the mother’s inheritance, so that sometimes she inherits a third and other times a sixth, but this is exceptional, and it is not sound to attach the grandmother to the grandfather because the [paternal] grandfather is a part of the paternal male relatives [*ʿaṣabah*] who establishes his due by the medium of another paternal relative while the grandmother is someone who possesses an obligatory share and who establishes her due by the medium of someone [else] possessing a fixed share and so is weak [due to being lower down in the order]. It has been said that she has no fixed share at all, but that the sixth is a grant which the Prophet ﷺ assigned to her. For this reason a party of those who have the view that it is returned to those who have fixed shares said that it is not returned to the grandmother because of the weakness of her obligatory share, and it is one narration from Aḥmad.

As for the grandfather, the people of knowledge agree that he stands in the place of the father in the conditions already mentioned before, and so he inherits – when there is a child – a sixth as an obligatory share, and in the case where there is no child he inherits by being an [*ʿaṣabah*] relative. If there is something left over in the case of female children he also takes that as a male [*ʿaṣabah*] relative according to his saying, "and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man."

However, they differ in the case where a mother and a grandmother both exist along with either the husband or wife. It is narrated of a party of the Companions that the mother has one third of what remains, just as in the case where there is a father along with her as we have seen previously. That is narrated of ʿUmar and Ibn Masʿūd as some of them narrated it. Some of them said that it is only narrated of ʿUmar and Ibn Masʿūd concerning the case where there is a husband, a mother and a grandfather that the mother takes a third of what remains.

It is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd in another narration, that the remaining half is shared between the grandfather and the mother in two halves. As for the

case of the wife, mother and grandfather, it is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd in a singular irregular transmission that the mother has a third of what remains. What is soundly transmitted from him, as the position of the dominant majority, is that she has a complete third. This resembles the division that Ibn Sīrīn made concerning the mother with the father where there is a husband along with them, that then the mother receives a third of what remains, but if there is a wife along with both of them, then the mother receives a third [of the total not the remainder].

The majority of the people of knowledge take the position that the mother unqualifiedly has a third along with the grandfather, and that is the verdict of ʿAlī, Zayd and Ibn ʿAbbās. The difference between the cases where there is a mother along with a father and with a grandfather is that she along with the father is comprised under one name, and in terms of nearness to the deceased they are equal, so that the male of them takes the like of the portion of two females twice, as with the children and brothers and sisters. As for the mother along with the grandfather, then one name does not encompass them, and the grandfather is

a more distant relative than the father, so that it is not necessary to regard him as equal to him in that.

As for where there is a grandfather along with brothers and sisters, then if they are from [the same] mother, he precludes them, since they only inherit from the person with no direct heirs (*kalālah*), and the *kalālah* is someone who has no children or parents, except for [according to] an exceptional transmission from Ibn ʿAbbās.[23]

As for the case where they are from the same father or from both parents, then the people of knowledge, both earlier and later, differ about the ruling on their inheritance. Some of them unqualifiedly preclude the brothers and sisters because of the grandfather, just as they preclude them because of the father, and this is the verdict of aṣ-Ṣiddīq, Muʿādh, Ibn ʿAbbās and others. They sought to prove that by the fact that the grandfather is a father in the Book of Allah ﷻ and so he comes under the category of the father in the inheritance, just as the child of a child is a child and so comes under the category of the children in the case where there are no children, by unanimous agreement, and because brothers and sisters only inherit in the case of the person with no direct heirs so the

grandfather precludes them like the brothers and sisters from the father, and [also] because the grandfather is stronger [in his rights] than the brothers and sisters because of his combining both the right to a fixed share and the right of being an [*ʿaṣabah*] relative from one point of view, so he is like the father, and in that case that he is comprised under the general meaning of his saying, "and whatever the obligatory shares leave is for the nearest male man."

Some of them make the brothers and sisters and grandfather share, which is the position of many of the Companions. Most of the *fuqahā*' after them have a lengthy disagreement about how to share out the inheritance between them. Some of the right-acting first generations used to hesitate over the ruling on them and would not give an answer concerning them, because of the ambiguity of their case and the difficulty of resolving it. If it were not for fear of being too lengthy we would expand on this case, but unfortunately that would lead to prolixity.

As for the ruling on the inheritance of brothers and sisters from both parents or from the father, Allah, exalted is He, mentions it in the end of Sūrat an-Nisā' in His words, exalted is He:

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ

"They will ask you for a *fatwā*. Say: 'Allah gives you a *fatwā* about people who die without direct heirs (*kalālah*): If a man dies childless but has a sister she receives half of what he leaves."[24] *Kalālah* [a person with no direct heirs] is derived from the encompassment (*takallul*) of lineage and its encompassment of the deceased, and that necessarily requires the absolute negation of ascription of relationship from both directions, ascendants and descendants. His stating textually, exalted is He, that there are no children (descendants) draws attention with stronger reason to the fact that there are no ascendants, because the ascription of a child to his parent is more obvious than his ascription to his child, so that the mention of the lack of a child draws attention to the lack of a parent with greater reason. Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq said, "*Kalālah* is someone who has no child nor parent,"[25] and the dominant majority of the Companions and the people of knowledge after them followed him in that. That has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith among the *mursal* hadith of Abū

Salamah ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān from the Prophet ﷺ which Abū Dāwūd narrated in *al-Marāsīl*.[26] Al-Ḥākim narrated it in a version from Abū Salamah from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūʿ* hadith, and he declared it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, but connecting it back by mentioning Abū Hurayrah is weak.[27]

His saying, "If a man dies childless but has a sister, she receives half of what he leaves," means that if the deceased does not have any children neither males nor females, then at that point the sister has a half of what he leaves as an obligatory [fixed] share. What is implicit in this is that if he has children then the sister does not get a half as a fixed share, and that moreover if the child is male, then he has more right to all of the property because of what we established concerning the inheritance of male children if they are alone [without other heirs], because they are the nearest of the [*ʿaṣabah*] relatives, and they preclude brothers [of the deceased] from inheriting so how could they not preclude sisters from inheriting, because He says, exalted is He:

وَإِن كَانُوٓاْ إِخۡوَةٗ رِّجَالٗا وَنِسَآءٗ فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثۡلُ حَظِّ ٱلۡأُنثَيَيۡنِ

“If there are brothers and sisters the males receive the share of two females.”[28] This comprises within it the case where there are those possessing obligatory shares such as daughters and others. So if the males of the siblings along with the sisters are entitled to the surplus, then if they are alone [without sisters] they are similarly entitled to it with greater reason. If the child is female, then the sister does not here have a half as an obligatory share, but she has the remainder because of her being an [*ʿaṣabah*] relative according to the dominant majority of the people of knowledge, and we have previously mentioned that and the disagreement about it.

If there was a son who does not take all of the property and a sister, for example, a son a half of whom is free[29] then according to the ones who make him inherit half of the inheritance, and that is the *madhhab* of Imam Aḥmad and other people of knowledge, is it said that the son here precludes a half of the sister’s fixed share, so that in his presence she inherits a quarter as a fixed share, or is it said that he becomes like a daughter, so that the sister along with him becomes like the paternal relative [who takes the remainder] as she does along with the sister,[30] but he

precludes her receiving a half of her share as a paternal relative, and so along with his existence she takes the remaining half by being a paternal relative? This is a possible interpretation, and on this case our colleagues have two reasonings.

His saying, exalted is He:

وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهَا وَلَدٌ

"and he is her heir if she dies childless,"[31] means that the brother alone inherits the property of his sister if she does not have any male or female children. If she has a son, then he has more right than the brother without any complication, because he is the nearest male relative. If the child is a daughter, then the remainder after her fixed share belongs to the brother because he is "the nearest male man," but he does not inherit her entire property in this case as he would if she did not have children.

His saying:

فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ

“If there are two sisters they receive two-thirds of what he leaves,”[32] means that the fixed shares of two females [sisters] are two-thirds, just as the fixed share of one is a half. All of this is the ruling where there are only brothers or [only] sisters.

As for the ruling where there are both of them, He says, exalted is He, “If there are brothers and sisters the males receive the share of two females,” which comprises the case where they alone exist. As for in the case when there is someone with a fixed share, such as children or someone else, for example one of the two spouses or the mother or half-siblings through the mother, then what is left over after their fixed shares is for the brothers and sisters to be shared among them with the male receiving the share of two females.

It is clear from what we have mentioned that the existence of a child only precludes the inheritance of obligatory [fixed] shares of sisters from both parents or the father, but it does not prevent their inheriting as paternal relatives along with their sisters, by unanimous agreement, nor their being regarded as due a share because of their paternal relationship when they alone exist along with daughters [of the

deceased], according to the dominant majority. The condition of being without direct heirs is a pre-condition of establishing the fixed shares of the sisters, but not in establishing their inheritance, just as it is not a pre-condition for the inheritance of the males among them, by unanimous agreement. This is contrary to children of the mother, because negation of the condition of being without direct heirs [i.e. if direct heirs exist] precludes their fixed shares, and so if their fixed shares are precluded, then their inheritances are precluded because they have no position as paternal relatives in any case, because they establish their right through a woman, whereas sisters through both parents or a father establish their right by a male so they inherit because of their being paternal relatives in the existence of their sister, by unanimous agreement, and in the case where they are alone along with the daughters according to the dominant majority.

Since it is the case that the child [of the deceased] precludes the obligatory [fixed] share of the offspring of the same parents [of the deceased i.e. the deceased's siblings] or the offspring from the father [of the deceased] without their inheriting in principle without

obligatory [fixed] shares, then it has been said that Allah, exalted is He, only singled out the non-existence of a child in His saying, “childless” and does not mention the lack of parents or the father because the grandfather is comprised within it [the term “father”], and the grandfather does not at all preclude the inheritance of brothers and rather they share with him in the inheritance sometimes by fixed shares and sometimes in another way. This – according to the position of those who say that the grandfather does not preclude the brothers [inheriting] – and they are the dominant majority – is obvious. This is all in the case of there being offspring of both parents only or [only offspring] of the father. If they are all collectively present, then, the [*ʿaṣabah*] paternal relatives who are children of both parents preclude all of the father’s children without any disagreement, even [i.e. without disagreement] with regards the sister from both parents existing along with a daughter, according to those who regard her as a paternal relative who because of her preclude a brother from both parents.

There is in the *Musnad*, *at-Tirmidhī* and Ibn Mājah that ʿAlī said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed

judgement that the individuals of the children of the mother inherit apart from the children of the fellow-wives, the man inherits from his brother by his father and his mother but not from his brother from his father [and his mother's fellow-wife]."[33]

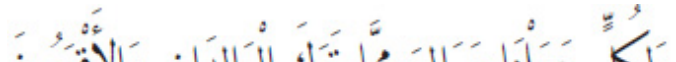
ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed judgement that the brother from the father and mother [of the deceased] has the most right to the inheritance of the person who dies without children or parents, then after him a brother from the father." This is also one of those things comprised under his saying ﷺ, "whatever remains is for the nearest male man."

The reality of that is that everything which is shown by the Qur'ān even if it is by [its] indication, is not part of what the fixed shares leave over, but on the contrary it is part of making the obligatory [fixed] shares mentioned in Qur'ān reach their people, such as making children, male and female, inherit the surplus after the fixed shares, for the male twice the share of the female, and making siblings, themales andfemales ofthem, inherit similarly. Thatshowsby indication that the males of them take the remainder when they are alone, with greater reason. It also show indication that the sister takes the remainder, where she is with a

daughter, just as she would take it along with her brother, and that someone who is a more remote relative, such as the brother's son, the paternal uncle or his son, is not given precedence over her, because if her brother does not preclude her inheriting, how can someone who is a more remote relative preclude her inheriting? All of this falls under the domain of making the fixed shares reach their people and under the domain of the division of the property between the people who are due fixed shares according to the Book of Allah.

As for someone who is not by name mentioned among the [*ʿaṣabah*] paternal relatives in the Qur'ān, such as the brother's son, the paternal uncle and his son, who is only comprised under the general implications of the likes of His saying, exalted is He:

"But blood relations are closer to one another in the Book of Allah,"[34] and His saying:



"We have appointed heirs for everything that parents and relatives leave,"[35] then this needs this hadith, I mean the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, for working out their inheritances. Thus if no other heir for the property is found other than them, then they are alone and amongs them the nearest relative is given priority and then the next nearest, because he is the nearest male man. And if there exist those who have obligatory [fixed] shares, such as one of the spouses, the mother or the mother's child, or daughters by themselves, or sisters by themselves, who do not consume all of the property, then all of the remainder is for the nearest man out of all of these. For this reason, even if these were siblings, males and females, then the men would be singled out apart from the females, as opposed to the case where there are children and brothers, because they share in the remainder or in all of the property both their males and their females according to the explicit text of the Qur'ān. The hadith only shows the inheritance of the paternal relatives whose males are singled out apart from their females, and they are those apart from children and brethren. This is the judgement

concerning the paternal relatives who are mentioned in the Book of Allah and in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās.

As for those who have obligatory [fixed] shares, we have mentioned their inheritances, and none of them remain except for the two spouses and the brothers through the mother. As for the two spouses, then they inherit because of the marriage contract. Because the intimacy, affection, mutual help and mutual support between them is like that which is between close relations then their inheritance is made like the inheritance of close relations, and the male of them is given twice of that which the female receives, because of the way that the male is distinguished over the female because of additionally benefitting [the family] through expenditure and assistance.[36]

As for the mother's children, they are not of the father's tribe, nor of his kinsfolk, but in a sense they are of his maternal relations (*maḥrams* or *maḥārim*), so Allah has given as a fixed share for one of them a sixth and as a group they inherit a third as a gift [that maintains ties], and He makes their males and females equal since their male does not have more than their female in life in terms of mutual support and assistance, as there is between the people of a tribe or

among close kinsfolk, and so He made them equal in the gift. For this reason, bequests to non-relatives are not legislated at more than one third, and indeed on the contrary, a third is a great deal for them, since they are more remote in terms of relationship than the mother's children, and so one ought not to give them more than that which is given to the mother's children, but on the contrary one should reduce it.

One of them sought to show by his saying, "whatever remains is for the nearest male man" that there is no inheritance for maternal relations because he did not appoint the right of inheritance for someone not mentioned in the Qur'ān except for the nearest male relatives, and this ruling is particularly for paternal relations and not for maternal relations because whoever makes maternal relations inherit, makes both males and females inherit.

Those who regard maternal relations as inheriting, answer by saying that the hadith shows the inheritance of the paternal relations but it does not negate that others inherit, and the inheritance of maternal relations is shown by other proofs in addition to that which the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās shows.

As for his saying, “is for the nearest male man,” despite the fact that man can only be male, then the authentic answer to that is that “man” is sometimes used unqualifiedly and what is meant is “person”, such as in his saying, “Whoever finds his property with a man who has gone bankrupt...” and in this there is no difference if one finds it with a man or a woman. So qualifying it with “male” removes this possibility and makes it clear that it is for males and not females which is what is intended. It is similar with “son”, since it can be used unqualifiedly meaning something more general than the male such as in his saying, “the son of the way (the traveller)”. The qualification son of labun is used as a term in *zakāh* for a male [three-year old camel]. As-Suhayli has some discussion on this hadith in which there is an unnatural approach, a vague use of language making it bear meanings which it does not plainly bear, which is futile, and a group of those whom we reached refuted him, and Allah knows best.

1 Those following the Ẓāhirī *madhhab* whose most famous members were its founder Dāwūd aẓ–Ẓāhirī and the Andalusian

Ibn Ḥazm, and whose method was characterised by adopting a literatlist (*ẓāhirī*) approach to texts. Trans.

2 ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (19038)

3 Al-Bukhārī (6736)

4 Al-Bukhārī (6741)

5 Abū Dāwūd (2893)

6 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176. In this chapter we have amended the Bewley translation in some places to become more literal since otherwise it becomes more difficult to follow the reasoning of the author. Trans.

7 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

8 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

9 Muslim (1615)

10 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

11 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

12 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

13 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

14 Abū Dāwūd (2891), at-Tirmidhī (2093) and Aḥmad (3:352)

15 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

16 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

17 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

18 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

19 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

20 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

21 See Qur'ān Sūrat an-Nisā': 12 "...no direct heirs".

22 Sūrat an-Nisā': 11

23 The *kalālah*: most of the Companions agreed on its definition as a person who upon his death leaves neither parents nor children with only Ibn ʿAbbās disagreeing and saying that the *kalālah* is someone who has no children but who may have parents. Trans.

24 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

25 Ibn Abī Shaybah (11:415-416) and ʿAbd ar-Razzāq (19190)

26 Abū Dāwūd *al-Marāsīl* (371)

27 Al-Ḥākim (4:336)

28 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

29 The other half of whom is enslaved. Ed.

30 A mistake, and what is meant is the daughter. Trans.

31 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

32 Sūrat an-Nisā': 176

33 At-Tirmidhī (2095), Ibn Mājah (2715) and Aḥmad (1:79)

34 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 75

35 Sūrat an-Nisā': 33

36 The distinction of males over females mentioned here is due to the fact that when the family requires help and assistance in relation to some form of expense, it is males who are expected to come forward and spend, similarly the *Sharīʿah* has placed a greater burden of expense on men's shoulders compared to women such as the expense of maintaining wives and children and supporting the extended family when they are in need. So the balance is in the fact that although men appear to inherit more, they have also been given greater financial obligations whereas women inherit relatively less but equally have far fewer financial obligations. Ed.

الحديث الرابع والأربعون

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ : ﴿ الرَّضَاعَةُ تُحَرِّمُ مَا تُحَرِّمُ الْوِلَادَةُ ﴾ .

خَرَّجَهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Breastfeeding and Kinship

ʿĀ’ishah ﵂ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Breastfeeding makes *ḥarām* that which birth makes *ḥarām*.” Al-Bukhārī (2646) and Muslim (1444) narrated it.

They narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a version of ʿAmrah from ʿĀ’ishah. Muslim also narrated in a version of ʿUrwah from ʿĀ’ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whatever is *ḥarām* from kinship is *ḥarām* from breastfeeding.” They both narrated it also in a version of ʿUrwah from ʿĀ’ishah as her own words, and they both narrated it in a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ.[1] At-Tirmidhī narrated it in a hadith of ʿAlī from the Prophet ﷺ.[2]

The people of knowledge are unanimous that one must act by this hadith in general, and that

breastfeeding makes *ḥarām* that which kinship makes *ḥarām*, so let us mention all of the things that are made *ḥarām* by kinship so that we can then know what becomes *ḥarām* from breastfeeding. We say:

Both birth and kinship affect prohibition in marriage and that has two categories:

First, an eternal prohibition [even when] alone [as the man's only wife],[3] and it is of two types:

First, that which becomes *ḥarām* just through kinship so that man's ascendants are *ḥarām* for him no matter how high in [direct] ascendancy and his descendants no matter how low in direct [descendancy]; the descendants of his nearest ascendants[4] even if remote in descendancy, and the descendants of his remote ascendants[5] but not their descendants.[6] So his ascendants comprise his mothers and grandmothers, even if remote, from the direction of his father and his mother. Among his descendants are his daughters and his children's daughters how ever remote. Among his nearest ascendants' descendants are his sisters through both of his parents or from one of them, their daughters, his brothers' daughters and their own children no matter how low in descendancy. Included in the descendants of his

remote ascendants are paternal and maternal aunts, and his parents' paternal and maternal aunts no matter how high in ascendancy. There only remain *ḥalāl* for a man from among his close relatives the descendants of his remote ascendants who are his paternal and maternal uncles' and aunts' daughters.

Second, those who are prohibited through kinship along with another reason, which is his being an in-law. It is forbidden for a man [to marry] the [widowed or divorced] wives of his father and grandfather; the [widowed or divorced] wives of his sons and grandsons; the mothers of his own wives; and the daughters of wives with whom he has consummated marriage. So it is forbidden for a man to marry his wife's mother and grandmothers through the father or mother no matter how remote the ascendancy, and similarly it is forbidden him to marry his wife's daughters, who are his step-daughters, and their daughters no matter how remote the descendancy, and similarly the daughters of his wife's sons, who are [thus] daughters of his step-sons, which ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad stated textually, and about which no disagreement is known.

It is forbidden for him to marry his father's wife[7] or a grandfather's wife[8] even if remote in ascendancy, and his son's wife and [grandson's wife] even if remote in descendancy. The inclusion of the above in the prohibition by kinship is obvious because their being prohibited is by way of the kinship of the man along with the fact that they are in-laws.

As for his wives' mothers and daughters, their prohibition along with their being in-laws is because of the relationship of the wife. Therefore, the prohibition does not go out by that from being by kinship along with its being joined to the reason of being an in-law, because the prohibition by reason of just kinship and kinship joined with being an in-law is common to both men and women, so that it is prohibited to a woman to marry her ascendants no matter how remote [their ascendancy] and her descendants no matter how remote [their descendancy], and the descendants of her nearest ascendants, no matter how remote their descendancy, of her brethren and the children of her brethren no matter how remote their descendancy, and the descendants of her distant ascendants who are her paternal and maternal uncles and aunts even if higher

in ascendancy, but this [prohibition] does not apply to their sons [her cousins], and all of this is purely by reason of kinship.

As for kinship joined with in-lawship, then it is prohibited to her to marry her husband's father or grandfather and so on, or to marry his son or grandson and so on, and that [prohibition] applies merely by the contracting of the marriage. It is prohibited to her to marry her daughter's or granddaughter's husband and so on [just] because of the contracting of the marriage, and her mother's or grandmother's husband and so on, but however with the condition of the consummation of the marriage.[9]

The second category: is an eternal prohibition of uniting [in marriage certain categories] as opposed to marrying them individually. This prohibition is only on men since it is impossible for women to be permitted to marry two husbands. Any two women between whom there is such kinship that would prohibit them together [in marriage] i.e. where it is the case that if one of them had been a man it would not have been permissible to him to marry the other, so then it is prohibited to join two such women within a marriage union [to the same man]. Ash-Shaʿbī said, "The Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ used to say, 'A man must not unite in marriage two women such that if one of them were a man it would not be allowed for him to marry the other.'" This is in the case where the prohibition is because of kinship, and it was in that way that Sufyān ath-Thawrī and most of the people of knowledge explained it. If it is for some other reason than that of kinship, for example that a man unite in marriage the [divorced or widowed] wife of a man and his daughter through another wife, then it is permitted according to most people, but some of the right-acting first generations disliked it.

Then once what is prohibited through kinship is known, then whatever is prohibited because of it, the equivalent of that is prohibited because of breastfeeding. Thus it is prohibited for a man to marry his mothers through breastfeeding even if higher [in ascendancy i.e. and grandmothers, etc.], and his daughters [and granddaughters] through [his wife's] breastfeeding, and his sisters in breastfeeding, the daughters of his sisters in breastfeeding, and his paternal and maternal aunts due to breastfeeding, no matter how remote [in ascendancy], but not their [the aunts'] daughters.

The meaning of this is that when a woman breastfeeds an infant in the [legally] acceptable manner and within the period that counts, then she becomes a mother of his according to the text of the Book of Allah, and so she becomes prohibited to him[in marriage]and her mother and grandmothers, nomatter how remote, whether her mothers or grandmothers are from kinship or themselves through breastfeeding. All of her daughters become his sisters through breastfeeding and thus are prohibited to him according to the clear text of the Qur'ān, and all the rest of the [details of] prohibition due to breastfeeding

are understood from the Sunnah, just as it is understood from the Sunnah that it is not only prohibited to join two sisters in marriage, but also a woman and and her paternal aunt, and similarly a woman and her maternal aunt. Thus, since the children of the woman who did the breastfeeding, whether through kinship or breastfeeding, are brethren of the child who has been breastfed, then the daughters of his brethren are also prohibited to him. The Prophet ﷺ refused to marry the daughter of Ḥamzah and the daughter of Abū Salamah, giving the reason that their fathers were brothers of his through breastfeeding.[10]

Similarly, the sisters of the woman who breastfed him are prohibited to him because they are his maternal aunts, and the prohibition spreads to the husband of the woman who breastfed him so that he becomes a father of the child, and all his children whether through the woman who breastfed or other women, and whether through descent or through breastfeeding, become brethren to the child who has been breastfed, and his [the father's] brothers become the child's paternal uncles. This is the verdict of the dominant majority of the people of knowledge of the

right-acting first generations, and the four imams after them agreed unanimously about it. What shows that from the Sunnah is that which is transmitted from ʿĀ'ishah that Aflah, the brother of Abū Quʿays, asked permission [to see] her after the veil[11] was revealed. ʿĀ'ishah said, "I said, 'By Allah! I will not give him permission until he seeks permission from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, because it was not Abū Quʿays who breastfed me, but his wife who breastfed me.'" She said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came in, I mentioned that to him, and he said, 'Give him permission, because he is your paternal uncle, may your hand be covered in dust!'"[12] Abū Quʿays was the husband of the woman who breastfed ʿĀ'ishah. They narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in the same sense.

Ibn ʿAbbās was asked about a man who had two female slaves one of whom had breastfed a girl and the other of whom had breastfed a boy, whether it is permissible of the boy to marry the girl, and he answered, "No. The semen [which made the two women generate milk] is one."

Even if the milk with which she breastfeeds the infant had gathered without intercourse with a man because she is an unmarried woman whose milk has

gathered, or she is a virgin or someone past menopause, then most of the people of knowledge take the position that breastfeeding from her renders the prohibition, and the woman who breastfeeds becomes a mother of the infant. Ibn al-Mundhir quotes that as a consensus of those from whom one may memorise of the people of knowledge, and it is the verdict of Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, Isḥāq and others.

Imam Aḥmad took the position in the well known position which is transmitted textually from him that the prohibition does not spread [to the husband and his kin] in any case unless he [the husband] is a sexually vigorous male who makes the milk of his breastfeeding flow. It is quoted of ash-Shāfiʿī that he made a similar verdict.

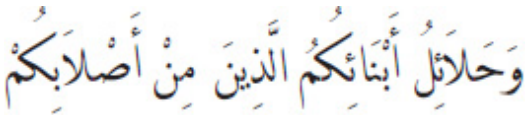
If his relationship with respect to the owner of the milk were interrupted, such as the child of adultery, then does the prohibition extend to the adulterer the owner of the milk? This depends upon whether the daughter of adultery is prohibited to the adulterer. The position of Abū Ḥanīfah, Aḥmad and Mālik in a narration from him is that she is forbidden to him, as opposed to the position of ash-Shāfiʿī. Imam Aḥmad went very far in strenuously rejecting whoever

disagreed on that. Then according to their verdict, does the prohibition extend to the adulterer the owner of the milk so that he is the father of the child which is breastfeeding or not? On that there are two statements narrated from our companions, and Ibn Ḥāmid chose that the prohibition does not extend to him, and Abū Bakr and the Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā chose that the prohibition extends to the adulterer, and it is a text from Aḥmad, and he quoted it of Ibn ʿAbbās, and it is the verdict of Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh which he transmitted from Ḥarb.

The prohibition from breastfeeding extends to that which is prohibited by kinship along with in-lawship: either from the aspect of the kinship of the man such as his father's wife or son's wife, or from the aspect of the wife's kinship such as her mother or her daughter, and to that which it is prohibited to bring together because of the kinship of the wife also, such as bringing together two sisters or a woman and her paternal or maternal aunt. All of that is prohibited when it derives from breastfeeding just as it is when it derives from kinship because it is comprised in his saying ﷺ, "That is *ḥarām* from breastfeeding which is *ḥarām* from kinship," and the prohibition of all of that [mentioned above] is because of kinship, some of it is

because of the kinship of the husband and some because of the kinship of the wife, and the imams of the right-acting first generations have given explicit textual statements on that about which there is not known to be any disagreement among them. Imam Aḥmad made an explicit textual statement seeking to show the proof by the general sense of his saying, "That is *ḥarām* from breastfeeding which is *ḥarām* from kinship."

As for His saying:



"the wives of your sons whom you have fathered,"[13] they say that He did not mean by it that the wives of sons through breastfeeding are not prohibited, but He only meant to exclude the wives of adopted sons [by mentioning "sons whom you have fathered"] who are not sons through kinship, just as the Prophet ﷺ married the wife of Zayd ibn Ḥārithah after he had adopted him.

This prohibition by reason of breastfeeding is particularly with respect to the child who is breastfed and extends to his children, but it does not extend to

someone of the degree of the breastfed child such as his brothers and sisters, nor does it extend to someone who is an ascendant of his such as his father, grandfather, etc., his mother, grandmother, etc., and his paternal and maternal aunts and grand aunts, etc. The woman who breastfeeds is herself permitted to the biological father of the child being breastfed and to his brother, just as the biological mother of the child being breastfed and his biological sister are permitted to the father through breastfeeding of the breastfed child and to his [biological] brother. This is the position of the dominant majority of the people of knowledge. They said that it is permitted for him to marry the [half] sister of his brother through breastfeeding, and the [half] sister of his daughter through breastfeeding, so much so that ash-Sha'bi said, "She is more *ḥalāl* than Mā' Qadas [a small lake near Homs]." Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit and Aḥmad declared openly that she is permitted.

Ashʿath narrated that al-Ḥasan disapproved of a man marrying the daughter of his son's wetnurse saying, "[She is] his son's sister," but he saw no harm in his marrying her mother, meaning his son's wetnurse. Sulaymān at-Taymī narrated that al-Ḥasan

was asked about a man marrying his brother's sister through breastfeeding, and he said nothing about it, and this necessarily means that he was hesitant over it. It is likely that al-Ḥasan only used to dislike that in the sense of regarding it as reprehensible for the sake of precaution (*makrūh tanzīhan*) but not in the sense of regarding it as *ḥarām*, because of its ambiguous resemblance to that which in name is prohibited because of kinship, but that this in itself does not require prohibition.

Many *fuqahā*' of our colleagues [the Ḥanbalīs] and others make an exception of two forms out of those things which are prohibited because of kinship, and they said, the equivalents of these in breastfeeding are not prohibited:

First, the mother of the sister is prohibited in kinship but not when because of breastfeeding.

Second, the son's sister is prohibited by kinship but not when from breast-feeding, and there is no need to exclude these two nor either one of them.

As for the sister's mother, she is indeed prohibited by kinship because she is a mother or a wife of the father not because she just happens to be the mother of the sister [without either of the above being true],

so that the prohibition should not be attached to that which Allah has not attached it. Thus, there are cases in breastfeeding – and they are the mother of the sister who is not a mother nor a wife to the father so that she is not prohibited, because she is not the equivalent to the same figure in kinship. As for the sister of the son, Allah, exalted is He, forbids the stepdaughter with whose mother marriage has been consumated, and so she is prohibited because she is a stepdaughter with whose mother marriage has been consumated not because she is the sister of his son. Consumation in breastfeeding is non-existent and so the children of the wetnurse are not prohibited because of it.

Something that is comprised under the general meaning of his saying, "That is *ḥarām* from breastfeeding which is *ḥarām* from kinship," is that if someone declares the *ẓihār* divorce from his wife and likens her to someone who is prohibited because of breastfeeding, and he says to her, "You are to me like my mother through breastfeeding," does the prohibition of *ẓihār* become firmly established through that or not? Concerning that there are two positions:

First, that through it the prohibition of *ẓihār* is firmly established, and that is the position of the

dominant majority, among them Mālik, ath-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, al-Awzāʿī, al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ, ʿUthmān al-Bittī[14], and it is the well known position of Aḥmad.

Second, that the prohibition is not established through that, and that is the verdict of ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad hesitated over it in the narration of Ibn Manṣūr.

1 Al-Bukhārī (2645) and Muslim (1447)

2 At-Tirmidhī (1146)

3 ... as opposed to the prohibition specific to the case when the man takes a woman as an additional wife. This becomes clear when the second category is explained. Ed.

4 A mans nearest ascendant would be his father. Ed

5 Remote ascendants are the brothers and sisters of one's parents. Ed.

6 Their descendants would be one's first cousins. Ed.

7 Meaning his stepmother since his own mother is covered under the first category. Ed.

8 This is the step grandmother. Ed.

9 ... and not merely by the contracting of it as in the earlier cases. Ed.

10 Al-Bukhārī (2645, 5101) ad Muslim (1447)

11 Meaning the command for women to cover themselves in front of men who are strangers. Ed

12 Al-Bukhārī (2646) and Muslim (1444)

13 Sūrat an-Nisā': 23

14 At-Taymī in a second copy of the text. Trans.

الحديث الخامس والأربعون

أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ عَامَ الْفَتْحِ؛ وَهُوَ بِمَكَّةَ يَقُولُ: ﴿إِنَّ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ حَرَّمَ بَيْعَ الْخَمْرِ، وَالْمَيْتَةِ، وَالْخِنْزِيرِ، وَالأَصْنَامِ﴾، فَقِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! أَرَأَيْتَ شُحُومَ الْمَيْتَةِ، فَإِنَّهُ يُطْلَى بِهَا السُّفُنُ، وَيُدْهَنُ بِهَا الْجُلُودُ، وَيَسْتَصْبِحُ بِهَا النَّاسُ؟ قَالَ: ﴿لا، هُوَ حَرَامٌ﴾، ثُمَّ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ: ﴿قَاتَلَ اللهُ الْيَهُودَ، إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ حَرَّمَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّحُومَ، فَأَجْمَلُوهُ، ثُمَّ بَاعُوهُ، فَأَكَلُوا ثَمَنَهُ﴾. خَرَّجَهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

The Sale of Ḥarām Things

Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the Year of the Opening [of Makkah to Islam] while he was in Makkah, saying, “Allah and His Messenger forbid the sale of wine, *maytah*,[1] pork and idols.” Someone asked, “Messenger of Allah, what do you think of the fat of *maytah*, because it isused to daub ships, and to oil skins, and people use it as oil for lamps?” He answered, “No. It is *ḥarām*.” Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said at that, “May Allah fight the Jews; Allah forbade them the fat, and so they melted it and then

sold it and consumed its price." Al-Bukhārī (2236 and 4633) and Muslim (1581) narrated it.

They narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from a hadith of Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb from ʿAṭā' from Jābir. There is in a version of Muslim's that Yazīd said, "'Aṭā' wrote to me..." and he mentioned the rest of it. For this reason Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said, "I do not know that Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb heard anything from ʿAṭā'," meaning that he only transmitted his writing from him. Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb also transmitted from ʿAmr ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿAbadah from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr from the Prophet ﷺ the like of it.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "It reached ʿUmar that a man sold wine and so he said, 'May Allah fight him! Does he not know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "May Allah fight the Jews! Fats were made *ḥarām* to them and then they melted them and sold them," and in a version, "and they ate their prices."[2]

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās from the Prophet ﷺ similar to it, in which he added, "When Allah forbids the consumption of something, then He forbids its price for them."[3] Ibn Abī Shaybah narrated

it and his wording is, “When Allah forbids something, He also forbids its price.”

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “May Allah fight the Jews! Fats were prohibited them, and so they sold them and ate their prices.”[4]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ʿĀ’ishah that she said, “When the *āyāt* at the end of Sūrat al-Baqarah were revealed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out and recited them to people. Then he forbade trading in wine.” In the version of Muslim there is, “When the *āyāt* at the end of Sūrat al-Baqarah were revealed concerning usury, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out to the mosque and prohibited trading in wine.”[5]

Muslim narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah has prohibited wine. So whoever this *āyah* reaches and he has something of it, let him not drink it or sell it.” He [Abū Saʿīd] said, “So people directed themselves to what they had of it in the streets of Madīnah and poured it out.”[6]

He also narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that a man gave a present to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ of a leathern water-bag full of wine.” The Messenger of

Allah ﷺ asked him, “Do you not know that Allah has forbidden it?” He said, “No.” He [Ibn ʿAbbās] said, “He said something secretly to another man, and so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked him, ‘What did you say to him?’ He answered, ‘I told him to sell it.’ He said, ‘The One Who forbids that it be drunk forbids its sale.’” He said, “So he opened the water-bag until everything in it was gone.”[7]

The upshot of all of these *āyāt* is that that which Allah has forbidden us to make use of, He forbids us to sell and consume its price, as is narrated clearly in the preceding narration, “When Allah forbids something He forbids its price.” This is a general comprehensive wording which logically follows in the case of everything the utilisation of which is *ḥarām*, of which there are two categories:

First, that the utlisation of which takes place while the original of it remains and is not consumed, such as idols, because the utilisation that is made of them is association of partners with Allah which is unqualifiedly the most serious act of disobedience. Added to that is that whose utilisation is forbidden such as writing [something] involving *shirk*, or magic, or acts of innovation or acts of deviation and going

astray. It is similar with forbidden sculpted forms [and images], forbidden instruments of entertainment such as the Tanbur [a kind of instrument like a mandolin], and similarly buying slave-girls for singing.

There is in the *Musnad* from Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah sent me as a mercy and a guidance for all creatures, and ordered me to do away with reeds [possibly flutes] and *kannarat* – meaning lutes and pulsatile musical instruments – and the idols which were worshipped in the Jahiliyyah. My Lord swears an oath by His might, 'Any of My slaves who drink a mouthful of wine, I will give them to drink in its place some of the hot water of Jahannam, whether he is punished or forgiven it, and any who give it to a small child I will give him to drink in its place some of the hot water of Jahannam whether he is punished or forgiven for it. Any of My slaves who gives it up out of fear of Me I will give him it to drink in the Enclosure of Purity [Paradise].' It is not permitted to sell them, nor buy them, nor to teach them [singing], nor to trade in them, and their prices are *ḥarām*,"[8] [meaning] singing [slave] girls.

At-Tirmidhī narrated it and his wording is, "Do not sell songstresses and do not buy them. Do not teach

them [singing], and there is no good in trading in them. The price they fetch is *ḥarām*. It was about the like of that that Allah revealed:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ

'But there are some people who trade in distracting tales...'[9]." Ibn Mājah narrated it also,[10] and there are some things said about the chain of transmission of the hadith. The like of it is narrated in hadith of ʿUmar and ʿAlī whose two chains of transmission also have weakness in them.

Those who declare singing *ḥarām*, such as Aḥmad and Mālik, both say that when a singing slave-woman is sold, she is to be sold on the basis that she is an ordinary unskilled slave, and no [extra] price is to be taken for her singing, even if the slave-girl belongs to an orphan, which Aḥmad clearly stated. The [fact of] singing does not prevent the basic transaction of selling a slave, male or female, since use is made of them in other areas than singing such as in service, etc., which are some of the most important purposes for slaves. Yes, if it is known that the purchaser is only purchasing the slave for some *ḥarām* usage, it is not

valid to sell him to him according to Imam Aḥmad and other people of knowledge, just as it is not valid according to them to sell juice to someone who will take it for the purpose of making wine, nor to sell weapons in a time of sedition and civil disturbance, nor to sell *rayyahin* and drinking vessels when it is known that wine is to be drunk from them, nor the sale of youths to someone who is known to be sexually indecent.

Second category, that which is utilised along with using up its original. If its major purpose is prohibited then its sale is prohibited, just as the sale of pigs, wine and *maytah* are prohibited even though in part of them there are benefits which are not prohibited, such as that someone in pressing need can eat *maytah* [including meat slaughtered by a *kāfir* such as a Zoroastrian], and clear a choking throat with wine and putting out a fire with it, and sewing with pig-bristles according to some people, and making use of its hair and skin according to those who hold that view. However, when these usages are not intended, they are not given any consideration and the sale is prohibited because of the fact that the major purpose in the pig and *maytah* is that they are to be eaten, and

in wine that it should be drunk, and no attention is paid to anything else. He ﷺ indicated this meaning when someone asked him, “What do you think about the fat of *maytah*, because it is used to daub ships, and to oil skins, and people use it as oil for lamps?” and he answered, “No. It is *ḥarām*.”

People differ about the meaning of his saying ﷺ “It is *ḥarām*.” A party say that he meant the aforementioned usage of *maytah’s* fat is *ḥarām*, so that this is a means of stressing the prohibition of selling *maytah*, since he did not regard any of the usages made of it to be permissible.

A party say that on the contrary he meant that its sale is *ḥarām* even though it may be made use of in these ways because of the fact that the major purpose in fats is their consumption, so that their sale is not permissible for that reason.

The people of knowledge differed about making use of the fat of *maytah*. ʿAṭā’ gave a concessionary license for it, and similarly Ibn Manṣūr transmitted [a concessionary license] from Aḥmad and Isḥāq except that Isḥāq said, “If it is needed. As for the case where some scope exists [not to make use of it], then no.”

Aḥmad said, “It is permissible if he does not touch it with his hand.”

A party say that is not permissible, and it is the verdict of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Abū Ḥanīfah, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr narrated a consensus on that from everyone but ʿAṭā’.

As for pure oils which become impure because of something dirty that falls into them, then there is a well known disagreement in the schools of ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad and others, as to whether or not one can make use of them and use them as oil in lamps, concerning which there are two narrations from Aḥmad.

As for selling them, most take the position that it is not permitted to sell them. From Aḥmad there is the narration, “It is permitted to sell them to a *kāfir* and he should be told that they are unclean,” and it is narrated of Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī. Some of our companions deduce the permissibility of selling them as based on the permissibility of using them as oil in lamps, but that is weak and contrary to the textual statement from Aḥmad to the contrary, because the fats of *maytah* are not permitted to be sold even if some say that it is permitted to make use of them.

Some of them base it on the view that they become clean when washed, so that it becomes at that point like the garment daubed with something impure. The apparent outward sense of the words of Aḥmad is that it is unqualifiedly prohibited to sell it because the reason is that the impure oil has in it *maytah*, and the price for the sale of *maytah* may not be used.

As for the remaining parts of *maytah*, then that of it on which there is a ruling that it is pure may be sold because of the permissibility of making use of it, such as the hair and horns according to those who take the position that they are pure, and similarly the skin according to the position of those who say that it is pure without being tanned, as is quoted of az-Zuhrī, and which the chapter headings of al-Bukhārī indicate, and he sought to show it by his saying, "All that is prohibited of *maytah* is eating it."[11] As for the dominant majority who regard the skin to be impure before it is tanned, most of them prohibit its sale also because it is a portion of *maytah*. One took an isolated position and permitted its sale as is permitted the sale of polluted clothing, but [in this case] the clothing itself is pure and some impurity has occurred to it, but the skin of the *maytah* is a part of it and is itself

impure. Sālim ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar said, “Is the sale of the skins of *maytah* anything other than like eating its meat?” Ṭāwus and ʿIkrimah disapproved of it, and an-Nakhaʿī said, “They used to disapprove of selling it and then eating its price.”

As for in the case where it is tanned, those who take the position that when it is tanned it is pure permit it to be sold. Those who do not believe that it is pure when tanned do not permit its sale. Aḥmad stated textually that it is not permitted to sell wheat when there is urine of a donkey in it until it has been cleaned, and perhaps he meant selling it to someone who does not know its condition for fear that he might eat it not knowing its impurity.

As for the dog, it is established in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Masʿūd al-Anṣārī that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prohibited the price of the dog.[12]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Rāfiʿ ibn Khadīj that he heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, “The worst of earnings are the payment to a prostitute, the price [paid for a dog], and the earnings of the cupper.”[13]

There is in it from Maʿqil al-Jazarī from Abū’z-Zubayr that he said, “I asked Jābir about the price paid for a dog or a cat, and he said, ‘The Prophet ﷺ

forbade that.'"[14] This is only known from Ibn Lahīʿah from Abū'z-Zubayr. Imam Aḥmad rejected the narrations of Maʿqil from Abū'z-Zubayr and he said, "They resemble the hadith of Ibn Lahīʿah." Someone followed that up and it was found to be as Aḥmad ﷺ said.

The people of knowledge differ about the sale of dogs, most of them considering it *ḥarām*, among them al-Awzāʿī, Mālik in the well-known position from him, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq and others. Abū Hurayrah said, "It is usury." Ibn Sīrīn said, "It is the foullest of earnings." ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā said, "I do not care whether it is the price of a dog I consume or the price of a pig [for they are equally bad]." These people have their reasonings:

First, that it is only prohibited because of its impurity, and these all hold that the sale of everything which is in itself impure is *ḥarām*. This is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and Ibn Jarīr, and a group of our companions agree with them, such as Ibn ʿAqīl in his *Naẓariyyāt* and others. They hold that we only permit the sale of the mule and the donkey since we do not say that they are impure, but this contradicts the consensus.

Second, that it is not unqualifiedly permitted to make use of the dog or to acquire it as it is with the mule and the donkey, but it is only permitted to acquire it for specialised purposes, and that does not make its sale permissible just as a pressing need [such as famine] for *maytah* and blood does not make their sale permissible. This is the reasoning of a party of our colleagues and others.

Third, it is only forbidden to sell it because of its low and despicable nature, because it has no value except to people who are greedy and contemptible, and it is easily found, so it is forbidden to take a price for it in order to stimulate desire for sharing equally with others that which is surplus to one's needs. This is the reasoning of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and others of the right-acting first generations, and one of our companions said similarly about the prohibitions of selling cats.

A party gave a concessionary license for the sale of those dogs which it is permitted to make use of, such as trained hunting dogs. That is the verdict of ʿAṭā', an-Nakhaʿī, Abū Ḥanīfah and his companions, and it is one narration from Mālik. They said that it is only forbidden to sell that which it is forbidden to make use

of. Ḥammād ibn Salamah narrated from Abū'z-Zubayr from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ forbade the price of the dog and the cat,[15] except for hunting dogs. an-Nasā'ī narrated it[16] and he said, "It is a rejected hadith." He also said, "It is not *ṣaḥīḥ*." Ad-Dāraquṭnī mentioned that the truth is that it is a *mawqūf* statement of Jābir. Aḥmad said, "It is not sound that the Prophet ﷺ gave a concessionary license for hunting dogs." Al-Bayhaqī and others indicated that this exception was confused by one of the narrators and he thought it was in the case of sale, but it was in fact in the case of use. Ḥammād ibn Salamah in his narrations from Abū'z-Zubayr is not strong. Whoever said that this hadith is according to the conditions of Muslim – as a party of the later generations thought – has made a mistake, because Muslim did not narrate anything from Ḥammād ibn Salamah from Abū'z-Zubayr, and he made clear in the book *at-Tamyīz* that his narrations from many of his shaykhs or most of them are not strong.

As for selling cats, the people of knowledge differ about its being disliked. Some of them dislike it, and that is narrated of Abū Hurayrah, Jābir, ʿAṭā', Ṭāwus, Mujāhid, Jābir ibn Zayd, al-Awzāʿī and Aḥmad in one

narration from him, and he said, “It is less serious than the skins of animals of prey.” This is the chosen position of Abū Bakr of our companions. Ibn ʿAbbās, ʿAṭā’ in one narration, al-Ḥasan, Ibn Sīrīn, al-Ḥakam and Ḥammād gave a concessionary license for the sale of cats, and it is the verdict of ath-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad in the well known position of his. From Isḥāq there are two narrations, and from al-Ḥasan there is that he disapproved of the sale of cats but gave a concessionary license for their purchase in order to make use of them.

Some of these did not regard the prohibition of selling them as sound. Aḥmad said, “I do not know of anything about it that is sound or clearly established.” He also said, “The hadith about that are conflicting.”

Some of them interpreted the prohibition to refer to that for which there is no use such as the wild [cat] and the like.

Some said that he only prohibited its sale because it is an ignoble [creature] and there is little honour[17] in [concerning oneself with] it, because it is easily found and the need of it is a motive, and it is one of people’s utilities which it would not harm them to be

generous in giving away the surplus of, and being mean and greedy in that is one of the ugliest forms of bad character, and so for that reason it is prohibited to take a price for it.

As for the rest of animals which are not eaten, then those in which there is no benefit such as vermin,[18] it is not permitted to sell, and that which is mentioned of some benefit in some of them is very little and thus does not render the sale permissible, just as the Prophet ﷺ did not permit the sale of *maytah* when those benefits they contained were mentioned to him. For this reason the sound position is that it is not permitted to sell leeches to suck blood, nor the sale of maggots for fishing, and the like.

As for that in which there is benefit for hunting with such as the lynx, falcon and the hawk, most of his companions quote concerning the permissibility of that sale two [contrary] narrations from Aḥmad. Some of them permit their sale and mention that there is a concensus about that, and interpret the narration of their disapproval [from Aḥmad], such as the Qāḍī Abū Yaʿlā in *al-Mujarrad*. Some of them say that it is not permitted to sell the lynx and the eagle – but quotes concerning that another reasoning which is that it is

permissible – and permits the sale of falcons and hawks without quoting any disagreement about that, and that is the position of Ibn Abī Mūsā.

Most of the people of knowledge permit the sale of hawks, falcons and eagles, for example, ath-Thawrī, al-Awzāʿī, ash-Shāfiʿī, Isḥāq, and the textually stipulated position from Aḥmad in most of the narrations from him is the permissibility of their sale, and in one narration he hesitated over its permissibility if they are not trained. Al-Khallāl said, "The practice is based on that which the majority narrate, that it is permissible to sell them in all conditions."

Some of our companions regard the ruling on the elephant to be the same as the ruling on the lynx and the like, but there are some other views on that, and what is textually related of Aḥmad in the narration of Ḥanbal is that it is not permitted to sell it nor buy it, and he regarded it as in the same position as predatory animals. It is quoted that al-Ḥasan said, "One may not mount its back." He said, "It is deformed." This shows that there is no benefit in it.

It is not permitted to sell bears, the Qāḍī said in *al-Mujarrad*. Ibn Abī Mūsā said that it is not permitted to sell apes and monkeys. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr said, "I do not

know any disagreement about that among the people of knowledge." The Qāḍī said in *al-Mujarrad*, "If it can be made use of in a situation to protect and guard goods, then it is like the hawk and the falcon, but if not, then it is like the lion which it is not permissible to sell." The sound position is that it is absolutely prohibited, and that the use in it is very little and it is not that which is intended so the sale is not permitted just as in the case of the benefits which there are in *maytah* [and yet the sale is not permitted].

Among the things which it is not permitted to sell are the corpses of *kuffār* when they are killed. Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "The Muslims killed a man of the idolaters on the day of al-Khandaq, and they gave money for his body. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Give them his body, because he is a foul corpse, and it is a foul ransom,'"[19] and he would not accept anything from them. at-Tirmidhī narrated it[20] and his wording is, "The idolaters wanted to buy the body of a man of the idolaters but the Prophet ﷺ refused to sell to them." Wakīʿ narrated it in his book in another manner from ʿIkrimah as a *mursal* hadith, and then Wakīʿ said, "The corpse is not to be sold."

Ḥarb said, “I asked Isḥāq, ‘What do you say about selling the bodies of idolaters to the idolaters?’ He said, ‘No.’” Abū ʿAmr ash-Shaybānī narrated that ʿAlī was brought al-Mustawrid al-ʿIjlī who had become a Christian. He asked him to turn in *tawbah* but he refused, and so he killed him. The Christians sought to buy back his body for thirty thousand, but ʿAlī refused and burnt it [the corpse].

1 *Maytah*, literally “dead [meat]”, can refer to any animal not slaughtered according to the *Sharīʿah* including animals that have simply died of natural causes. Trans.

2 Al-Bukhārī (2223) and Muslim (1582)

3 Abū Dāwūd (3488)

4 Al-Bukhārī (2224) and Muslim (1583)

5 Al-Bukhārī (459, 2084), and Muslim (1850)

6 Muslim (1578)

7 Muslim (1579)

8 Aḥmad (5:257)

9 Sūrah Luqmān: 6

10 At-Tirmidhī (1282) and Ibn Mājah (2168)

11 Al-Bukhārī (1492) and Muslim (363)

12 Al-Bukhārī (2237) and Muslim (1567)

13 Muslim (1568)

14 Muslim (1569)

15 *Sinnawr*: cat, although *hirr* is more common. Trans.

16 *Sunan an-Nasā'ī* (7:309)

17 *Murū'ah* although literally "manliness" is a quality that can apply to women, and thus is translated as "honour". Trans.

18 *Ḥasharāt:* vermin such as reptiles, hedgehogs and jerboas, etc. Trans.

19 Aḥmad (1:248)

20 At-Tirmidhī (1715)

الحديث السادس والأربعون

عَنْ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَبِي مُوسَى الأَشْعَرِيِّ ﷺ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ بَعَثَهُ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ، فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ أَشْرِبَةٍ تُصْنَعُ بِهَا، فَقَالَ: ﴿وَمَا هِيَ؟﴾، قَالَ: الْبِتْعُ، وَالْمِزْرُ، فَقِيلَ لأَبِي بُرْدَةَ: وَمَا الْبِتْعُ؟ قَالَ: نَبِيذُ الْعَسَلِ، وَالْمِزْرُ: نَبِيذُ الشَّعِيرِ، فَقَالَ: ﴿كُلُّ مُسْكِرٍ حَرَامٌ﴾. خَرَّجَهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

Intoxicants

Abū Burdah narrated from his father Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī that the Prophet ﷺ sent him to the Yemen, and he asked him about drinks which were made there. He asked, "What are they?" He answered, "*Bitʿ* and *mizr*." – Someone asked Abū Burdah, "What is *bitʿ*?" He said it is a *nabīdh* made from honey, and *mizr* is a *nabīdh* made from barley." – He answered, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*." Al-Bukhārī narrated it (6214).

Muslim narrated it and his wording is that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent me, I and Muʿādh, to the Yemen, and I said, 'Messenger of Allah, there is a

drink made in our land called *mizr* [made] from barley, and a drink called *bitʿ* made from honey.' He said, 'Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*.'[1] There is in a version of Muslim's, "So he said, 'Everything which intoxicates you [and keeps you] from the prayer is *ḥarām*.'" In another version of his he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was given concise comprehensive speech and discourse and its conclusions, and he said, 'I forbid every intoxicant which intoxicates [and keeps you] from the prayer."

This hadith is a source [showing] the prohibition of consumption of all intoxicants which cloud the intellect. Allah mentions in His Book the reason which requires the prohibition of intoxicants. The first time that wine was prohibited was at the time of the prayer when one of the Muhājirūn prayed, and when he recited in his prayer and became confused in his recitation and so His saying, exalted is He, was revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! do not approach the prayer when you are drunk, so that you will know what you are saying."[2] Then the crier of the Messenger of Allah

ﷺ would cry, “Let a drunk person not approach the prayer!” Then Allah made it *ḥarām* absolutely with His saying, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ

“You who have *īmān*! wine and gambling, stone altars and divining arrows are filth from the handiwork of Shayṭān. Avoid them completely so that hopefully you will be successful. Shayṭān wants to stir up enmity and hatred between you by means of wine and gambling, and to debar you from remembrance of Allah and from *ṣalāh*. Will you not then give them up?”[3]

Allah, glory be to Him, mentions the reason of the prohibition of wine and gambling, which is that by them *shayṭān* stirs up enmity and hatred, so that whoever becomes drunk then his intellect becomes disordered, and then he may prevail over harming people in their persons and their property, and he may go so far as to kill. It is the mother of all foul things so that someone who drinks it kills people and commits

adultery, and he may even become a *kāfir*. This sense has been narrated of ʿUthmān and others, and it is also narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith.[4]

Someone who gambles may be beaten and his property taken from him by force, so that nothing remains to him, and so that his spite towards the person who took his property will be very strong. Everything which leads to enmity and hatred is *ḥarām*. He informs us, glorious is He, that by wine and gambling, *shayṭān* debars from remembrance of Allah and from *ṣalāh*. Someone who is drunk, then his intellect departs or is disordered, and he is not able to remember Allah nor pray. For this reason a party of the right-acting first generations said that the person who drinks wine spends hours in which he does not recognise his Lord, and Allah, glorious is He, only created people to recognise Him, to remember Him, to worship Him and obey Him. Whatever leads to the prevention of that and interposes between the slave and the ma'rifah-recognition of his Lord, His remembrance and intimate discourse with Him is *ḥarām*, and that is intoxication. This is contrary to sleep, because Allah, exalted is He, created people thus and compels them to sleep, and their bodies are

unable to carry on without it because it is rest for them from exertion and tiredness, and it is one of the greatest blessings of Allah on His slaves. When the *mu'min* sleeps according to as much as he needs, then wakes up for remembrance of Allah, intimate discourse with Him and supplication of Him, then his sleep is an aid to him for *ṣalāh* and remembrance of Allah. For this reason one of the Companions said, "I reckon upon [a reward for] my sleep as I reckon upon [a reward for] my standing [in prayer]."

Similarly, gambling debars from remembrance of Allah and the *ṣalāh*, because the person who does it holds constantly to it with his heart, and is occupied with it away from all of the things which are ordinarily of benefit to him or important to him so much so that he can hardly remember them because he is so completely absorbed in it. For this reason, ʿAlī said, when he passed by some people playing chess, "What are these statues you are clinging devotedly to?"[5] [6] Helikened them to those who cling devotedly to statues. It is narrated in a hadith, "The person who is constant in drinking wine is like the worshipper of an idol,"[7] because his heart is attached to it so much

so that he can hardly give it up just as the worshipper of the idol cannot give up his worship.

All of this is the opposite of the purpose for which Allah created His slaves, making their hearts empty for the purpose of His ma'rifah-recognition, love of Him, fear of Him, remembrance of Him, intimate discourse with Him, supplicating Him and earnest and intense devotion to HIm. Whatever interposes between the slave and that, and for which the slave has no pressing need, but which on the contrary is purely harmful to him, is then *ḥarām*. It is narrated of ʿAlī that he said to some whom he saw playing chess, "It was not for this that you were created."[8] From this it is known that gambling is *ḥarām* whether there is anything exchanged or not. Chess is like backgammon or worse than it because it occupies those who play it so that they do not remember Allah and do not do the prayer, more than does backgammon.

The purpose [of the discussion] is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*. Everything which intoxicates [and keeps one] from the prayer is *ḥarām*."

The hadith on that from the Prophet ﷺ are transmitted by several or numerous chains of transmission (*mutawātir*). They narrate in the two

Ṣaḥīḥ books from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every intoxicant is 'wine', and every wine is *ḥarām*." Muslim's wording is, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*."[9] They both narrate the hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about *bitʿ* and he answered, "Every drink which intoxicates is *ḥarām*. In the version of Muslim, "Every intoxicating drink is *ḥarām*."[10] Aḥmad and Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn declared this hadith to be *ṣaḥīḥ* and they both used it as a decisive proof. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr transmitted that the consensus of the people of knowledge is that the hadith is sound and that it is the most clearly established thing transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ on the prohibition of intoxicants.

As for that which some Ḥanafī *fuqahā'* transmit from Ibn Maʿīn on his casting aspersions on it, that is not established from him. Muslim narrated the hadith of Abūz-Zubayr from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*."

The dominant majority of the people of knowledge of the Muslims from among the Companions, the Followers and those after them of the people of knowledge of different lands took this position, and it is the *madhhab* of Mālik, ash-Shāfiʿī, al-Layth, al-Awzāʿī, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan and

others, and it is that upon which all of the people of Madīnah agreed unanimously.

A party of the people of knowledge of the people of Kufa differed and they said that 'wine' is only the wine of the grape in particular, and that whatever is other than that only that amount of it which intoxicates is *ḥarām*, and that less than that is not *ḥarām*. The people of knowledge of other cities continue to reject that position of theirs – even though in taking that position they were people of ijtihād who are forgiven [if mistaken] – among them a great number of people who are imams of knowledge and the *dīn*. Ibn al-Mubārak said, "I have not found concerning *nabīdh* a concessionary license from anyone which is sound except from Ibrāhīm, meaning an-Nakhaʿī." Similarly, Imam Aḥmad rejected that there is anything sound respecting that, and he compiled the *al-Ashribah* and did not mention in it anything about a concessionary license. He compiled a book about wiping over leather socks, in which he mentioned from one of the right-acting first generations that he rejected it. Someone asked him, "How did you not put the concessionary license in the book on drinks as you put it in [that on] wiping [over leather socks]?" He answered, "There is

no sound hadith giving a concessionary license for an intoxicant."

Something that shows that every intoxicant is wine, is that the prohibition of wine was actually revealed in Madīnah because the People of Madīnah asked about those drinks which they had, and they did not have wine derived from grapes. If it is assumed that the *āyah* on the prohibition of wine did not include [those drinks] which they had, there would not have been in it an explanation of what they had asked about, and then the locus of the cause [of the revelation] would be outside the general sense of the words, which is impossible.[11] When the prohibition of wine was revealed they poured out the drinks that they had which shows that that they understood that they [i.e. their drinks] were of the wine which they were commanded to avoid.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that Anas said, "Wine was prohibited to us when it was prohibited, and [circumstances were such that] we had a very little wine from grapes, most of our wine being from unripe dates and dried dates."[12]

There is from him that he said, "I used to give drink to Abū Ṭalḥah, Abū Dujānah and Suhayl bin

Bayḍā' a mixture of unripe and dried dates, which when wine was prohibited they cast away. I was their wine-pourer and the youngest of them. We used to count it in those days as wine."[13]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from him that he said, "We had no other wine than this *faḍīkh* [a *nabīdh* prepared from dates] of yours which you call *faḍiyyah*."[14]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from him that he said, "Allah revealed the *āyah* in which he prohibits wine at a time when there was no drink being drunk except [that made] from dates."[15]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Ibn ʿUmar that he said, "The prohibition of wine was revealed at a time when in Madīnah there were five drinks none of which were prepared from grapes."[16]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from ash-Shaʿbī that Ibn ʿUmar said, "'ʿUmar stood upon the minbar and said, 'The prohibition of wine was revealed and it is [made] from five: grapes, dates, honey, wheat and barley. Wine (khamr) is what obscures (khāmara) the intellect."[17] Imam Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated it as a hadith of ash-Shaʿbī from an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr from the Prophet ﷺ and at-

Tirmidhī mentioned that the position of those who say that it is from ash-Shaʿbī from Ibn ʿUmar from ʿUmar is the most sound, and Ibn al-Madīnī said something similar.

Abū Isḥāq narrated from Abū Burdah that he said, "'ʿUmar said, 'That which you ferment and age is wine. How could we have had wine, [that is] the wine of the grape?'"

There is in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad from al-Mukhtar ibn Fulful that he said, "I asked Anas ibn Mālik about drink in receptacles and he said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade the jar smeared with pitch and he said, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*."' I said, 'You are right. Drunkenness is *ḥarām*, but how about a drink or two with our food?' He answered, 'A little or a lot of an intoxicant is *ḥarām*.' He said, 'Wine is from grapes, dates, honey, wheat, barley and sorghum. Whatever you ferment from these is wine.'"[18] Imam Aḥmad narrated from ʿAbdullāh ibn Idrīs: "I heard al-Mukhtār ibn Fulful saying, '...'" This chain of transmission conforms to the conditions of Muslim.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Wine is from these two trees: the

date-palm and the grape-vine."[19] This is a clear statement that the *nabīdh* of dates is wine.

There is also a clear unequivocal statement of the prohibition of a little of that of anything that intoxicates in large amounts, as Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and at-Tirmidhī narrated, and he [at-Tirmidhī] regarded it as *ḥasan*, from Jābir that the Prophet ﷺ said, "That of which a great deal causes intoxication, then a little of it is *ḥarām*."[20]

Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated, and he [at-Tirmidhī] regarded it as *ḥasan*, in a hadith of ʿĀ'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*, and that of which a large vessel-full intoxicates, then a cupped palm-full of it is *ḥarām*." In another version of it there is, "A sip of it is *ḥarām*."[21] Aḥmad used that as a proof, and made that his *madhhab*. He was asked about someone who says, "It is not sound," and he said, "This is a man who goes beyond the limits," i.e. he goes beyond the limits in this statement of his. AnNasā'ī narrated this hadith in a version of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr from the Prophet ﷺ and it has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many different ways which it would be lengthy to mention.

Ibn ʿIjlān narrated from ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb, “Abū Wahb al-Jayshānī narrated to me from a deputation of the people of the Yemen that they came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him about some drinks which were in the Yemen. He said, ‘They named them to him as *bitʿ* from honey and *mizr* from barley.’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Do you become intoxicated from them?’ They answered, ‘If we have a lot we become intoxicated.’ He said, ‘Then it is *ḥarām* [to have] a little of that a lot of which intoxicates.’” Qāḍī Ismāʿīl narrated it.

The Companions used to use the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, “Every intoxicant is *ḥarām*,” as a proof to show that all types of intoxicant are *ḥarām*, those which existed in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and those which originated after him, just as Ibn ʿAbbās was asked about *bādhiq* [a type of Persian wine] and he said, “Muḥammad preceded *bādhiq* [in judgement]. That which intoxicates is *ḥarām*.” al-Bukhārī narrated it.[22] It indicates that if something is intoxicating then it is comprised in this general and comprehensive phrase.

Know that there are two types of intoxicant which remove the intellect:

First, that in which there is sweetness and entertainment, then this is wine whose drinking is *ḥarām*. There isin the *Musnad* fromṬalqal-Ḥanafī thathewas seated with the Prophet ﷺ and a man said to him, “Messenger of Allah, what do you think about a drink which we make in our lands from our fruits?” So he said ﷺ“Who is asking about the intoxicant? Do not drink it and do not give it to your Muslim brother to drink. For, by the One in Whose hand is my self! – or by the One by Whom the oath is sworn – if a man drinks it seeking the sweetness of its intoxication, Allah will not give him to drink wine on the Day of Rising.”[23]

A party of the people of knowledge say, “It is the same whether this intoxicant is solid or liquid, whether it is a food or a drink, whether it is from a grain, a fruit or from a milk, or anything else.” They include in that the hashish which is made from the leaves of cannabis and other things which are eaten because of the sweet [experience] and intoxication. There is in the *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* a hadith of Shahr ibn Ḥawshab from Umm Salamah that she said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade every intoxicant and narcotic.”[24] The narcotic is that which renders the

body in a stupor even if it does not reach the degree of [drunken intoxication] intoxication.

Second, that which makes the intellect depart and intoxicates but has no delight or emotion in it, such as *banj* (henbane) and the like. Our colleagues say that if one takes it for a remedy and if in the main it is safe, then it is permissible. It has been narrated from ʿUrwah ibn az-Zubayr that when gangrene occurred in his leg and they meant to amputate it the doctors said to him, "We will give you a medicinal drink so that you will become unconscious and so you will not perceive the pain of the amputation," and he refused saying, "I never thought that a person would take a drink such that he would become so unconscious as not to be mindful of his Lord."

It is narrated of him that he said, "I will not drink something which will interpose between me and the remembrance of my Lord ﷻ."

If someone takes it for any other reason than as a medication, then most of our colleagues such as the Qāḍī and Ibn ʿAqīl, and the author of *al-Mughni* say it is *ḥarām* because it leads to unconsciousness without any need for that, so that it is *ḥarām* just as is the drinking of an intoxicant. Ḥansh ar-Raḥabī narrated –

and he has some weakness in him as a narrator – from ʿIkrimah from Ibn ʿAbbās as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever drinks a drink which takes away his intellect [or renders him unconscious] has approached one of the doors to major wrong actions."[25]

A party, among them Ibn ʿAqīl in his *Funūn*, say that it is not *ḥarām* because there is no pleasure in it, and that wine is only forbidden because of the violent emotional states involved in it, but there is no stirring of the emotions with hashish (*banj*) and the like, nor any violence.

According to the position of the majority, if someone takes it for any other purpose than a necessity and becomes intoxicated by it, and then pronounces divorce, then the judgement on his divorce is the judgement on a drunk man. Most of our companions say that, such as Ibn Ḥāmid and the Qāḍī, and the colleagues of ash-Shāfiʿī. The Ḥanafīs say that his divorce does not take place, giving the reason that there is no pleasure in it, which shows that they do not regard it as *ḥarām*. The Shafi'is say that it is *ḥarām*, and that there are two positions as to whether the divorce takes place or not. The apparent meaning of the words of Aḥmad is that his divorce does not come

about contrary to the case of the drunk person. The Qāḍī interpreted that and he said, “He only said that while putting forward an argument against the Ḥanafīs, not because he believed it,” and the context of his words can be interpreted to mean that.

As for the *ḥadd* punishment, it is only required for that in which there is violence and strong emotions from the intoxicants because it is that which motivates people to [take intoxicants], and thus the *ḥadd* punishment is imposed as a preventative.

As for that in which there is intoxication without emotions and pleasure, then there is only discretionary punishment for it, because there is not such a motive for people to take it to such an extent that it requires a *ḥadd* punishment of a specific measure to act as a preventative, and it is like acts such as eating *maytah*, pork and drinking blood.

Most of the people of knowledge who regard the prohibition of a little of anything that intoxicates in large quantities hold the view that there is a *ḥadd* punishment for that of which a great deal intoxicates even if the person believes in its permissibility because of an interpretation he makes, and that is the position of ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad and contrary to that of Abū

Thawr, because he said, “He is not punished with the *ḥadd* punishment because he had an interpretation [that regarded the substance he took as permissible], and thus he is like someone who marries without the presence of a guardian [for the bride].” However, there is also disagreement about the *ḥadd* punishment of someone who marries without the bride having a guardian present, but the correct position is that there is no *ḥadd* punishment. Those who make a distinction between this case and that of someone who drinks *nabīdh* out of an interpretation [that permits it] do so on the basis that drinking *nabīdh* about which there is disagreement invites one to drink wine about which there is a consensus that it is *ḥarām*, contrary to the case of someone who marries without the presence of the bride’s guardian because it [marriage] renders [the couple] free of adultery about which there is unanimous agreement that it is *ḥarām* and which it is obligatory to abstain from. What is textually stated from Aḥmad is that someone who drinks *nabīdh* because of his interpretation is only punished with the *ḥadd* punishment because his interpretation is weak that it does not avert the *ḥadd* punishment from him, because he said in the narration of al-Athram from

him, “Someone who drinks *nabīdh* because of an interpretation is punished with the hadd punishment. And even if someone was taken to the Imam [amir] because he had divorced irrevocably, and then he retracted it interpreting it that irrevocable divorce is only a single divorce, and the Imam regards it as three divorces, yet they are not to be separated.” He said, “This is not the same as that. His affair is clear in the Book of Allah and in the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ. The prohibition of wine and of their drinking *faḍīkh* was revealed, and the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Every intoxicant is wine.’ So this is clear, whereas the irrevocable divorce is indeed something about which people differ.”

1 Muslim (1733)

2 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 43

3 Sūrat al-Mā’idah: 90-91

4 An-Nasā’ī (8:315)

5 See Sūrat al-Anbiyā’: 52. The words are those of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام to his people.

6 Ibn Abī Shaybah (738)

7 Ibn Mājah (3375)

8 Al-Bayhaqī (10:212)

9 Muslim (2003), the hadith of Ibn ʿUmar is not in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

10 Al-Bukhārī (242, 5585-6), and Muslim (2001)

11 In other words: if the prohibition did not include the drinks they had, which is what they had asked about, the response in the verse would have been irrelevant to the question, which is impossible because the Qur'ān does not provide irrelevant responses. Ed.

12 Al-Bukhārī (5580)

13 Al-Bukhārī (5600)

14 Al-Bukhārī (5617) and Muslim (1980)

15 Muslim (1982)

16 Al-Bukhārī (4616)

17 Al-Bukhārī (4619, 5581), and Muslim (3032)

18 Aḥmad (3:112)

19 Muslim (1985)

20 Abū Dāwūd (3681), at-Tirmidhī (1865) and Ibn Ḥibbān (5382)

21 Abū Dāwūd (3687), at-Tirmidhī (1866) and Ibn Ḥibbān (5359)

22 Al-Bukhārī (5598)

23 Ibn Abī Shaybah (5:66), al-Bukhārī in *at-Tārīkh al-kabīr* (4:205), Ibn Saʿd in *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt* (5:562)

24 Abū Dāwūd (3686)

25 Abū Yaʿlā (2348) and al-Bazzār (1356) and others

الحديث السابع والأربعون

عَنْ المِقْدَام بْنِ مَعْدِي كَرِبَ ﷺ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ الله ﷺ يَقُولُ: ﴿مَا مَلأَ آدَمِيٌّ وِعَاءً شَرًّا مِنْ بَطْنٍ، بِحَسْبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ أُكَلاتٌ يُقِمْنَ صُلْبَهُ، فَإِنْ كَانَ لا مَحَالَةَ؛ فَثُلُثٌ لِطَعَامِهِ، وَثُلُثٌ لِشَرَابِهِ، وَثُلُثٌ لِنَفَسِهِ﴾. رَوَاهُ الإِمَامُ أَحْمَدُ، وَالتِّرمِذِيُّ، وَالنَّسَائِيُّ، وَابْنُ مَاجَهْ، وَقَالَ التِّرْمِذِيُّ: حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ.

A Full Belly

Al-Miqdām ibn Maʿdīkarib said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘The Adamic [person] has not filled a vessel which is worse than a belly. Sufficient for the son of Ādam are some mouthfuls (*akalāt*) which will make his spine straight, but if there is no avoiding it then a third for his food, a third for his drink, and a third for his breath.’” Imam Aḥmad (4:132), at-Tirmidhī (2380), an-Nasā’ī (8:509) and Ibn Mājah (3349) narrated it. At-Tirmidhī said, “A *ḥasan* hadith.”

Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated his hadith from Yaḥyā ibn Jābir aṭ-Ṭā’ī from al-Miqdām. An-

Nasā'ī narrated it also in this way and in another way in a version of Ṣāliḥ ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Miqdām from his grandfather. Ibn Mājah narrated it in another way from him and he has other routes.

This hadith has been narrated along with the mention for its reason. Abū'lQāsim al-Baghawī narrated in his *Muʿjam* the hadith of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Muraqqaʿ that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ opened Khaybar [to Islam] when it was verdant and green with fruits. People fell upon the fruits, and then fever prostrated them. They complained to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Fever is the scout of death and Allah's prison on earth. It is a piece of the Fire. If it takes hold of you then cool water in water-skins and pour it over yourselves between the two prayers,' meaning *Maghrib* and *ʿIshā*'." He said, "They did that and it left them, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Allah has not created a vessel which when it is filled is worse than the belly. So if there is no avoiding it then make a third for food, a third for drink and a third for wind [breath].'"[1]

This hadith is a principle which comprises all the principles of medicine. It is narrated that when Ibn

Masiwayh the doctor read this hadith in the *Kitāb Abī Khaythamah* he said, “If people were to employ these words, they would be safe from illness and sickness, and the mental asylums and pharmacists’ shops would be unemployed.” He only said this because the source of every illness is indigestion, as one of them said, “The source of every disease is indigestion,” which has been narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but it is not sound as a *marfūʿ* hadith.

Al-Ḥārith ibn Kaladah the doctor of the Arabs said, “Abstinence is the main part of remedy, and repletion is the main part of every disease,” which some people ascribe as a *marfūʿ* hadith, but which is also not sound.

Al-Ḥārith also said, “What kills people and destroys predators in the wild is to enter food upon food before digestion has taken place.”

Someone else said, “If the inhabitants of the graves were asked, ‘What was the reason for your terms falling due?’ They would answer, ‘Indigestion.’”

These are some of the benefits of eating little food, and giving up eating to one’s fill with respect to the well-being and health of the body.

As for its benefits with respect to the heart and its well-being, then little food necessitates softness of

heart, strong understanding, humility of self, weakness of passionate desire and anger. A great deal of food necessitates the opposite of that.

Al-Ḥasan said, “Son of Ādam! Eat in one third of your belly, and drink in one third, and leave one third of your belly to breathe so that you can reflect.”

Al-Marwadhī said, “Abū ʿAbdullāh” – meaning Aḥmad – “began to stress the importance of hunger and poverty, so I said to him, ‘Is a man rewarded for abandoning appetites?’ He said, ‘How could he not be rewarded when Ibn ʿUmar said, “I have not eaten to repletion for four months”?’ I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh, ‘Does a man experience a soft heart when he eats until he is full?’ He answered, ‘I don’t think so.’”

Al-Marwadhi narrated from Abū ʿAbdullāh this saying of Ibn ʿUmar in other ways, and he narrated it with its chain of transmission that Ibn Sīrīn said, “A man said to Ibn ʿUmar, ‘Should I not bring you a digestive?’ He asked, ‘What is that?’ He answered, ‘Something which [helps to] digest food when you have eaten.’ He said, ‘I have not eaten until I was full for four months, and that was not because I was not able to do so, but I have met people who hungered more than eating until they were full.’”

There is with his chain of transmission that Nāfiʿ said, “A man came with a digestive to Ibn ʿUmar and said, ‘What is this?’ He said, ‘A digestive: something with which food is digested.’ He asked, ‘What should I do with it? Sometimes I have a month during which I do not eat my fill of food.’”

There is with his chain of transmission from a man that he said, “I said to Ibn ʿUmar, ‘Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān! Your flesh has become weak, you have become older and the people who sit with you do not recognise what is your due and your honour. If only you would tell your family to make something for you with which they could show you affection when you return to them.’ He said, ‘Woe to you! By Allah! I have not eaten my fill in eleven years, nor twelve years, nor thirteen years, nor fourteen years, not once. How would it be with me and there only remains of my life a tiny period [literally: the period between the two drinkings of a donkey][2]?’”

There is with his chain of transmission that ʿAmr ibn al-Aswad al-ʿAnasī used to keep away from satiety a great deal for fear of boastful self-exultation.

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated in his book *al-Jūʿ* (Hunger) with his chain of transmission from Nāfiʿ

that Ibn ʿUmar said, “I have not eaten until I was full since I accepted Islam.”

He narrated with his chain of transmission that Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ said, “Whoever eats little food, understands, makes others to understand, becomes pure and clear [in his being], and becomes soft-hearted. A great deal of food makes a person heavy and keeps him back from much of what he intends.”

Abū ʿUbaydah al-Khawwāṣ said, “Your death is in your satiety and your good fortune is in your hunger. If you eat your fill you will become heavy and sleep, and then the enemy will seize an opportunity against you. If you keep yourself hungry, you will lie in ambush for your enemy.”

ʿAmr ibn Qays said, “Beware of eating your fill, because it hardens the heart.”

Salamah ibn Saʿīd said, “A man will be reproached for eating his fill just as he is reproached for a wrong action which he does.”

There is that one of the people of knowledge said, “If you have a large belly, then adjust yourself for some time until you become empty.”

Ibn al-Aʿrābī said, “The Arabs used to say, ‘No man who continues to be large-bellied will complete his

resolve."

Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said, "If you want one of the necessities of this world or the coming, then do not eat until you have discharged it, because eating changes the intellect."

Mālik ibn Dīnār said, "The *mu'min* ought not to have his belly as the greatest of his concerns, or his appetite as that which dominates him."

He said, "Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān narrated to me, 'Al-Ḥasan or someone else said, "The trial of your father Ādam ﷺ was a morsel of food, and it will be your trial until the Day of Rising."'" He said, "It used to be said that whoever has mastery over his belly has mastery over all right actions. It used to be said that wisdom does not reside in a full stomach."

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwād said, "It used to be said that little food is an aid in hastening to good actions."

Qathm al-ʿĀbid said, "It used to be said that if a man's food is little his heart will be soft and his eye moist."

ʿAbdullāh ibn Marzūq said, "We think there is no [remedy] for boastful conceit like being perpetually hungry." So Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-ʿUmarī az-Zāhid

asked, “What is perpetual hunger according to you?” He said, “Its being perpetual is that you never ever eat your fill.” He asked, “How is someone who is in the world able to do that?” He answered, “How easy that is, Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, for the people of His close friendship and those whom He guides aright to His obedience! They do not eat unless it is without filling the belly and that is perpetual hunger.”

Something resembling this is the saying of al-Ḥasan when food was offered to one of his companions and he said to him, “I have eaten [so much] that I could not eat [any more].” Al-Ḥasan said, “Subḥān’Allāh! A Muslim who eats until he is unable to eat?!”

It has also been narrated with his chain of transmission that Abū ʿImrān al-Jūnī said, “It used to be said that whoever wishes his heart to be illuminated must eat little.”

ʿUthmān ibn Zā’idah said, “Sufyān ath-Thawrī wrote to me, ‘If you wish your body to be healthy and to sleep little, then eat little.’”

Ibn as-Sammāk said, “A man was alone with his brother and he said, ‘Brother, we are of too little significance to Allah that He should keep us hungry; He only makes His close friends hungry.”

ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Faraj said, “I said to Abū Saʿīd at-Tamīmī, ‘Does the one who fears [Allah] eat until he is full?’ He answered, ‘No.’ I asked, ‘Does the one who longs [for Allah] eat until he is full?’ He answered, ‘No.’”

It is narrated that some food was presented to Riyāḥ al-Qaysī and he ate from it. Someone said to him, “Eat some more, because I don’t think you have eaten your fill,” and he cried out and then he said, “How can I eat my fill during the days of this life while the tree of Zaqqūm, the food of the guilty, is before me?” The man lifted the food from in front of him and said, “You are on one thing and we are on another.”

Al-Marwadhī said, “A man said to me, ‘How is that fortunate man?’ meaning Aḥmad. I asked him, ‘How is he fortunate?’ He answered, ‘Does he not have bread to eat, and he has a wife with whom he lives and to whom he makes love?’ I mentioned that to Abū ʿAbdullāh, and he said, ‘He has told the truth,’ and he began to say, ‘We belong to Allah and to Him we are returning.’ Then he said, ‘Certainly, we eat our fill.’”

Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith said, “I have not eaten my fill in fifty years.” He said, “A man ought not to eat his fill

today of *ḥalāl* food, because if he eats his fill of *ḥalāl* food his self will call him to eat *ḥarām* food, so then how [could he eat] this filth?"

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said, "Whoever takes care of his belly, takes care of his *dīn*. Whoever is in control of his hunger possesses the good qualities of character. Disobedience of Allah is far from the hungry person and close to the person who has eaten until he is full. A full belly kills the heart, and from it comes rejoicing [over the world], exultant behaviour, and [immoderate] laughter."

Thābit al-Bunānī said, "It has reached us that Iblīs appeared to Yaḥyā ibn Zakariyyā', peace be upon both of them, and he saw on him pendants of every thing. Yaḥyā said to him, 'Iblīs, what are these pendants which I see upon you?' He said, 'These are the appetites by means of which I target the Children of Ādam.' He asked, 'Have I anything of them?' He answered, 'Perhaps you eat your fill, and then we make you too heavy for the prayer and for remembrance of Allah.' He said, 'Is there anything other than this?' He answered, 'No.' He said, 'By Allah! I will never fill my belly with food ever.' Iblīs said, 'By

Allah! I will never ever [again] counsel a Muslim sincerely.'"

Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī said, "When the person is hungry and thirsty the heart becomes pure and soft. When he eats and drinks his fill, the heart becomes blind." He said, "The key of the world is eating one's fill. The key of the next life is hunger. The source of every good in the world and the next world is fear of Allah ﷻ. Allah gives the world to those whom He loves and those whom He does not love. Hunger with Him is in among stored-up treasures and so He only gives it to those He loves in particular. That I should leave out one mouthful of my evening meal is preferable to me than that I should eat it and then stand up in prayer from the beginning to the end of the night."

Al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā al-Khushanī said, "Whoever wishes his tears to be copious and his heart to be soft, then let him eat and drink with a half of his belly." Aḥmad ibn Abi'l-Ḥawārī said, "I told this to Abū Sulaymān and he said, 'The hadith is only "A third food and a third drink," and I think that these people took themselves to account and profited by a sixth.'"

Muḥammad ibn Naḍr al-Ḥārithī said, “Hunger motivates one to have *birr*,[3] just as a big belly motivates one to be exultantly conceited.”

Ash-Shāfiʿī said, “I have not eaten my fill for sixteen years except for a single time which I threw up, because satiety makes the body heavy, drives away intelligence, attracts sleep and weakens a person from worship.”

The Prophet ﷺ recommended reducing one’s food in the hadith of alMiqdām when he said, “Sufficient for the son of Ādam are some little morsels which will keep his spine straight.” There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that he said ﷺ “The *mu’min* eats in one gut, and the *kāfir* eats in seven guts.”[4] What is meant is that the *mu’min* eats with the courtesy of the *Sharīʿah* and so he eats in one gut, but the *kāfir* eats according to the requirements of his appetite, and his vehement and inordinate desire and so he eats in seven guts.

He ﷺ along with recommending eating little and sufficing with some food he recommends that one prefer that others receive the remains of it, and so he said, “The food for one is sufficient for two. The food for two is sufficient for three. The food for three is sufficient for four.”[5]

The best of what the *mu'min* eats is in a third of his belly, and he drinks in a third and leaves a third for breath, as the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in the hadith of al-Miqdām, because a great deal of drink induces sleep and ruins the food. Sufyān said, "Eat what you like and do not drink. If you do not drink, sleep will not come upon you."

One of the right-acting first generations said, "There were among the Children of Israel youth who were devoted to worship. When it was time for them to break their fast someone stood up and said, 'Do not eat a great deal and thus drink a great deal, and thus sleep a great deal and thus lose a great deal.'"

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions used to hunger a great deal and they would reduce their eating of things for which they had appetite, and although that was because there was no food, yet Allah only chooses for His Messenger the most perfect and best conditions. For this reason, Ibn ʿUmar used to model himself on them in that connection even though food was available [in his time], as did his father before him.

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books that ʿĀ'ishah said, "The family of Muḥammad ﷺ did not eat their fill

from the time when he came to Madīnah of barley bread for three consecutive days until he was taken." In the version of Muslim she said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not eat his fill of barley bread on two consecutive days until he was taken."[6]

Al-Bukhārī narrated that Abū Hurayrah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never ate his fill of food for three days until he was taken."[7]

There is that he said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left the world without eating his fill of barley bread."[8]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿUmar that he gave the *khuṭbah* and he mentioned what people had obtained of the world, then he said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ shading himself one day twisting [branches of] bad quality *daqlah* date-palms [to get dates] with which to fill his belly."[9]

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I have been harmed for the sake of Allah when no one else has been harmed [with the like of it], and I have been made to fear for the sake of Allah and no one else has feared [the like of it]. Three days and nights have come to me when I had no food except what Bilāl's armpits concealed."[10]

Ibn Mājah narrated with his chain of transmission from Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to us and we spent three days unable – or he was unable – to [obtain] food.”[11]

There is with his chain of transmission that Abū Hurayrah said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was brought hot food and he ate. When he had finished he said, ‘Al-ḥamdu lillāh, hot food has not entered my belly since such-and-such a time.’”[12]

Indeed, Allah and His Messenger have censured those who follow their appetites. He says, exalted is He:

فَخَلَفَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوَاتِ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا

“An evil generation succeeded them who neglected the *ṣalāh* and followed their appetites. They will plunge into the Valley of Evil – except for those who make *tawbah*.”[13]

It is soundly established that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The best generation is my generation, then the ones who are immediately after them, then the ones who immediately after them. Then later there will come a people who will bear witness when they have not been asked to testify, and they will vow but they will not

fulfil [their vows] and among whom fatness will appear."[14]

There is in the *Musnad* that the Prophet ﷺ saw a fat man, and he began to indicate his belly saying, "If this was something other than this, it would be better for you."[15]

There is in the *Musnad* from Abū Barzah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The most fearful thing which I fear for you are the appetites of error [or of the valley in the Fire called *Ghayy*] in your bellies and your private parts, and the misleading desires."[16]

There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār and from others from Fāṭimah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The worst of my ummah are the ones who nourish themselves pleasurably, eating all sorts of food and dressing in all sorts of clothing and who speak diffusely with an affected clarity of speech."[17]

At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated a hadith that Ibn ʿUmar said, "A man belched in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and he said, 'Restrain your belch from us, because those who are most well fed in the world will have the longest hunger on the Day of Rising.'"[18]

Ibn Mājah also narrated it as a hadith of Salmān with the like of that. AlḤākim narrated it in a hadith

of Abū Juḥayfah but there are things said about all of their chains of transmission.

Yaḥyā ibn Mandah narrated in the book Manāqib Imam Aḥmad with a chain of transmission of his that Imam Aḥmad was asked about the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "A third for food, a third for drink and a third for breath," and he said, "A third for food: that is what is eaten for nourishment (qūt), and a third for drink and that is powers, and a third for breath and that is the *rūḥ* [spirit], and Allah knows best."

1 Also narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il an-nubuwwah* (6:120-121)

2 The relevance of this metaphor is in the fact that the donkey is one of the thirstiest animals; while others animal will suffice with one drink a day, the donkey visits the water hole twice a day. Ed.

3 *Birr* is an all encompassing virtue that includes considerate concern for the welfare of others, and has sometimes been translated as "complete goodness". Trans.

4 Al-Bukhārī (5393) and Muslim (2060)

5 Al-Bukhārī (5392), Muslim (2058) and at-Tirmidhī (1820)

6 Al-Bukhārī (5416, 6454), and Muslim (2970-1)

7 Al-Bukhārī (5432), Muslim (2970)

8 At-Tirmidhī (2472) and Ibn Mājah (151)

9 Muslim (2978)

10 At-Tirmidhī (2472) and Ibn Mājah (151)

11 Ibn Mājah (4149)

12 Ibn Mājah (4150)

13 Sūrah Maryam: 59-60

14 Al-Bukhārī (2615) and Muslim (2535)

15 Aḥmad (4:339)

16 Aḥmad (4:420 and 423)

17 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* (3:24), Aḥmad in *az-Zuhd*

18 At-Tirmidhī (2478) and Ibn Mājah (3350)

الحديث الثامن والأربعون

عَنْ عَبْدِاللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُما ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ : ﴿ أَرْبَعٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا ، وَ إِنْ كَانَتْ خَصْلَةٌ مِنْهُنَّ فِيهِ ؛كَانَتْ فِيهِ خَصْلَةٌ مِنَ النِّفَاقِ ؛ حَتَّى يَدَعَهَا : مَنْ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ ؛ أَخْلَفَ ، وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ ؛ غَدَرَ ﴾ .

خَرَّجَهُ الْبُخارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ.

Hypocrisy

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are four things such that whoever has them within him is a hypocrite, and if there is in him one of their traits there is one trait of hypocrisy in him until he gives it up: someone who when he speaks lies, if he promises he fails to fulfil, if he disputes he exceeds the limits, and if he makes a contract he is treacherous.” Al-Bukhārī (34, 2459 and 3178) and Muslim (58) narrated it.

The two of them narrated this hadith in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a version of al-Aʿmash from ʿAbdullāh ibn Murrah from Masrūq from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn

al-ʿĀṣ. They also narrated it in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The sign of the hypocrite is three [things]: when he talks he lies, when he promises he breaks the promise, and when he is trusted he betrays,” and in the version of Muslim, “even if he fasts and prays and claims that he is a Muslim,” and in another version of his also, “Among the signs of the hypocrite there are three [things].”[1] This has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in other ways.

A party of those who incline to being Murji’ah interpret this hadith to refer to the hypocrites who lived at the time of the Prophet ﷺ because they talked to the Prophet ﷺ and lied to him, and he entrusted them with his secret and they betrayed him, and they promised him that they would go out on military expeditions with him and they broke their promises. Muḥammad al-Muḥrim narrated this interpretation from ʿAṭā’ and that he said, “Jābir narrated this to me from the Prophet ﷺ,” and he mentioned that al-Ḥasan returned to this judgement of ʿAṭā’ when it reached him, but this is a lie, and this al-Muḥrim is a lying old man who is well known for his lies.

It has been narrated ofʿAṭā’ in two other ways which are weak that he rejected al-Ḥasan’s saying, “There are three things which if they are within someone he isa hypocrite,” and hesaid, “The brothers of Yūsuf spoke and they lied, and they promised and they broke their promise, and they were trusted but they betrayed the trust, but they were not hypocrites,” but this is not an authentic narration fromʿAṭā’, and al-Ḥasan didn’t say this from his own opinion but it only reached him from the Prophet ﷺ. The hadith is firmly established from him ﷺ and there is no doubtabout its firm establishment and its being sound. How the people of knowledge of any standing interpret and explain it is that hypocrisy is linguistically a type of deception and plotting, manifesting goodness and hiding the opposite, and that in the *Sharīʿah* it comprises two categories:

First, major hypocrisy, which is that a man should outwardly manifest that he has *īmān* in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and hide inwardly what is contrary to all of that or some of it. This is the hypocrisy which existed in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and about which the Qur’ān was revealed censuring such people and declaring

them to be *kāfirūn*, and it informed that such people are in the lowest levels of the Fire.

Second, lesser hypocrisy which is hypocrisry in deeds, and that is that a person shows an outward right-acting form and hides in his inward the opposite of that.

The main principles of this hypocrisy derive from the characteristics mentioned in these hadith, and they are five things:

First, that he should tell something to someone who believes him whereas he is lying to him. There is in the *Musnad* that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is a great betrayal to tell your brother something while he believes you and you are lying to him.”[2]

Al-Ḥasan said, “It used to be said, ‘Hypocrisy is that there exists a difference between the secret and what is shown openly, between word and action, between one’s entrance and one’s exit.’ It used to be said, ‘The foundation of hypocrisy upon which it is based is lying.’”

Second, when someone promises they break the promise, and there are two types of this:

First, that someone promises but his intention is not to fulfil his promise, and this is the worst kind of

breaking a promise, and if he says, “I will do suchand-such, inshā’Allāh, exalted is He,” and his intention is not to do it, then he is a liar and one who breaks his promise. Al-Awzāʿī said it.

Second, that someone promises with the intention of fulfilling his promise, and then it [i.e. its fulfilment] appears to him and he breaks it without any excuse to do so.

Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Zayd ibn Arqam that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If a man promises and intends to fulfil it, but does not fulfil it, then there is nothing against him.” At-Tirmidhī said, “Its chain of transmission is not strong.”[3]

Al-Ismāʿīlī and others narrated it in a hadith of Salmān that ʿAlī met Abū Bakr and ʿUmar and asked, “Why do I see you both so heavy?” They answered, “[Because of] some words which we heard from the Prophet ﷺ mentioning the attributes of the hypocrite, ‘When he promises he breaks his promise, when he speaks he lies, and when he is trusted he betrays.’ Who of us is safe from these attributes?” ʿAlī went in to see the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned that to him, and he said, “I told them, but I didn’t place it in the context in which you place it, but [it means] the hypocrite who

when he speaks says to himself that he will lie, who when he makes a promise says to himself that he will break his promise, and when he is trusted says to himself that he will betray."[4]

Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said about this hadith in the narrations of Salmān and Zayd ibn Arqam, "The two hadith are conflicting and in both chains of transmission there are two unknown people." Ad-Dāraquṭnī said, "The hadith is not firmly established and Allah knows best."

Aṭ-Ṭabarī and al-Ismāʿīlī narrated the hadith of ʿAlī as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "The promise is a debt. Woe to someone who promises and then breaks his promise," saying it three times.[5] In the chain of transmission there is an unknown person. It is narrated as a hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that he said, "Let none of you promise his small child and then not fulfil it, because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'A promise is a gift.'"[6] There are some views about the chain of transmission, but the first part of it is authentically narrated from Ibn Masʿūd as his own words.

Among the *mursal* hadith of al-Ḥasan there is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A promise is a gift."[7]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd from a *mawlā* of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Rabīʿah from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Rabīʿah that he said, "The Prophet ﷺ came to our house when I was an infant, and I went out to play. My mother said, 'ʿAbdullāh! come here and I will give you [something].' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'What do you mean to give him?' She answered, 'I mean to give him a date.' He said, 'If you had not done that it would have been written against you as a lie.'"[8] In the chain of transmission there is someone who is not recognised.

Az-Zuhrī mentioned that Abū Hurayrah said, "Someone who says to an infant, 'Come and get a date!' and does not give him anything, then it is a lie."[9]

The people of knowledge differ about the obligatory nature of fulfilling a promise, and some of them regard it as unqualifiedly obligatory. Al-Bukhārī mentioned in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Ibn Ashwaʿ passed judgement that [it is obligatory to fulfil] a promise, and that is the verdict of a party of the people of the Ẓāhirī [*madhhab*] and others. Some of them regard the fulfilment of a promise as obligatory if it necessarily requires endebting the person to whom the promise

was made, and that is quoted as the view of Mālik, but many of the *fuqahā*' do not unqualifiedly regard it as obligatory.

Third, someone who when he disputes goes beyond the limits. What is meant by going beyond the limits is that someone deliberately deviates from the truth so much that the truth become false and the false becomes truth, and that is one of the things to which lying leads, as he ﷺ said, "Beware of lying, because lying leads to going beyond the limit, and going beyond the limit leads to the Fire."[10]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from the Prophet ﷺ "The most hateful of men to Allah are those who argue violently."[11]

He said ﷺ, "You bring your disputes to me, and perhaps some of you are more persuasive in argument than others. I only pass judgement according to what I have heard. So, someone for whom I have passed judgement granting him something which is due to his brother, ought not to take it, because I have only granted him a piece of the Fire."[12]

He said ﷺ, "Indeed, some eloquence is magic."[13]

If a man has some power in argumentation – whether his argumentation is for the *dīn* or the world –

to such an extent that he can win an argument in favour of something false causing the listener to imagine that it is true thus weakening the truth and making it appear as if it were false, then that is one of the ugliest of forbidden things, and one of the foulest characteristics of hypocrisy. There is in the *Sunan* Abī Dāwūd from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever argues in favour of something that is false knowingly will continue to be the object of Allah's displeasure until he is withdraws from it."[14]

There is also in a narration from him, "Whoever supports an argument with something which is unjust, has brought upon himself anger from Allah."[15]

Fourth, if he makes a contract he is treacherous and does not fulfil the contract. He says:

وَأَوْفُواْ بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْؤُولاً

"Fulfil your contracts. Contracts will be asked about." (Sūrat al-Isrā':[34]) and He says:

وَأَوْفُواْ بِعَهْدِ اللّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدتُّمْ وَلاَ تَنقُضُواْ الأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلاً

“Be true to Allah’s contract when you have agreed to it, and do not break your oaths once they are confirmed and you have made Allah your guarantee,”[16] and He says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَناً قَلِيلاً أُوْلَئِكَ لاَ خَلاَقَ لَهُمْ فِي الآخِرَةِ وَلاَ يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلاَ يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلاَ يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“Those who sell Allah’s contract and their own oaths for a paltry price, such people will have no portion in the *ākhirah* and on the Day of Rising Allah will not speak to them or look at them or purify them. They will have a painful punishment.”[17]

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn ʿUmar that the Prophet ﷺ said, “For every treacherous one there is a banner on the Day of Rising by which he will be recognised.” And in a version, “The treacherous one will have set up for him a standard on the Day of Rising, and it will be said, ‘This is the treachery of so-and-so!’”[18] They both also narrated it in a hadith of Anas in the same sense.

Muslim narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Every treacherous one will have a standard at his buttocks on the Day of Rising.”[19]

Treachery is *ḥarām* in every contract between a Muslim and another, even if the person with whom the contract is made is a *kāfir*. For this reason there is in the hadith of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr from the Prophet ﷺ "Whoever kills a person with whom he has an agreement without just cause will not smell the fragrance of the Garden, and its fragrance can be experienced at a distance of forty years travel." Al-Bukhārī narrated it.[20]

Allah, exalted is He, commands in His Book that we fulfil idolaters' contracts if they undertake to fulfil their contracts and do not fail in them.

As for contracts with Muslims among themselves, then it is even more important to fulfil them, and to fail in them is a greater wrong action.

One of the most serious is to fail in the contract made to an imam (khalifah) by those who pledged allegiance to him and who are content with him. There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "[There are] three whom Allah will not address on the Day of Rising nor will He purify them, and they will have painful punishment," and he mentioned of them, "...and a man who pledges allegiance to an imam only pledging allegiance for

something worldly, so that if he gives him what he wants he will fulfil it, but if not he will not fulfil it."[21]

Comprised in the contracts which are obligatory to fulfil and forbidden to betray are all the contracts of the Muslims among themselves which they are mutually pleased with such as sales and marriages etc., of those obligatory contractual matters which must be fulfilled, and similarly that which it is obligatory to fulfil for the sake of Allah ﷻ of those things which the slave has made a binding contract with his Lord to do such as vowing to be of good and true conduct (*tabarrur*) and the like.

Fifth, betraying the trust. When a man is entrusted with something, it is obligatory on him to discharge it, as He says, exalted is He:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا

"Allah commands you to return to their owners the things you hold on trust."[22] The Prophet ﷺ said, "Return the trust to the one who entrusts you [with it]."[23] He said in his *khuṭbah* on the Farewell Ḥajj, "Whoever has something entrusted to him then return it to whoever entrusted him with it." He says ﷻ:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! do not betray Allah and His Messenger, and do not knowingly betray your trusts."[24] Betraying the trust is one of the qualities of hypocrisy.

There is in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd of his own sayings, and it is narrated as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Being killed in the way of Allah expiates every wrong action except for the trust. The person entrusted will be brought and it will be said to him, 'Discharge your trust!' and he will say, 'How, Lord, when the world has gone?' Then it will be said, 'Take him to the *Hāwiyyah*. So he will fall into it until he reaches its lowest depths, where he will find it [the trust] as in its [original] form and so he will place it on his neck and ascend with it in the fire of Jahannam until when he thinks that he has got out of it, it will slip and fall, and he will remain [chasing] after it for ever and ever." He said, "The trust is in the prayer, the trust is in the fast, the trust is in one's speech, and the most serious of all that is things deposited with one."[25]

It has been narrated of Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb al-Quraẓī that he derived what is in this hadith –

meaning the hadith, “The signs of the hypocrite are three,” – from the Qur’ān, and he said, “The proof of all of that is in the Book of Allah, exalted is He:

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ

‘When the *munāfiqūn* come to you they say, “We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah.” Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger and Allah bears witness that the *munāfiqūn* are certainly liars.’[26] And He says:

وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ عَاهَدَ اللَّهَ لَئِنْ آتَانَا مِن فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ فَلَمَّا آتَاهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

‘Among them there were some who made an agreement with Allah: “If He gives us of His bounty we will definitely give *ṣadaqah* and be among the *ṣāliḥūn*.” But when He does give them of His bounty they are tight-fisted with it and turn away, so He has punished them by putting hypocrisy in their hearts until the day they meet Him because they failed Allah in what they promised Him and because they lied.’[27] And He says:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُوماً جَهُولاً لِيُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُوراً رَّحِيماً

‘We offered the Trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to take it on and shrank from it. But man took it on. He is indeed wrongdoing and ignorant. This was so that Allah might punish the men and women of the *munāfiqūn*, and the men and women of the *mushrikūn*, and turn towards the men and women of the *mu’minūn*. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’[28]” The like of this is narrated of Ibn Masʿūd, and then he recited His saying:

فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقاً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ

“so He has punished them by putting hypocrisy in their hearts until the day they meet Him…”[29]

The upshot of the matter is that all lesser hypocrisy is derived from there being a difference between the inward secret and what is outward and public; al-Ḥasan said that. Al-Ḥasan also said, “A part of hypocrisy is the difference of the tongue and the heart,

the difference between the secret and what is public, and the difference between the entrance and the exit."

A party of the right-acting first generations said, "The humility of hypocrisy is that you see the body humble but the heart is not humble." The same sense has been narrated of ʿUmar, and it is narrated of him that he said upon the minbar, "The thing I most fear for you is the knowledgeable hypocrite." They said, "How can the hypocrite be knowledgeable?" He answered, "He speaks with wisdom, and acts dishonestly," or he said, "does things which are rejected." Ḥudhayfah was asked about the hypocrite and he said, "The one who describes *īmān* but does not act by it."

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Ibn ʿUmar that someone said to him, "We go to see our sultan and we say to them something other than what we say when we have left them." He said, "We used to count this as hypocrisy."[30]

There is in the *Musnad* from Ḥudhayfah that he said, "You say things which we used to count as hypocrisy in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ," and in a version he said, "A man used to say something in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by

which he would become a hypocrite, and I hear it from one of you in a day in a gathering ten times."[31]

Bilāl ibn Saʿd said, "The hypocrite says what he knows to be right and does what he knows to be wrong." From this perspective, the Companions used to fear hypocrisy in themselves and ʿUmar used to ask Ḥudhayfah about himself.

Abū Rajā' al-ʿAṭāridī was asked, "Did you this those you came upon of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ fearing hypocrisy?" He said, "Yes. I met a good number of them. Yes, a lot. Yes, a lot."

Al-Bukhārī said in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, "Ibn Abī Mulaykah said, 'I came upon thirty Companions of the Prophet ﷺ all of whom feared hypocrisy in themselves.'" It is mentioned about al-Ḥasan that he said, "No one fears it but a *mu'min*, and no one feels safe from it but a hypocrite."

It is narrated of al-Ḥasan that he swore an oath, "No *mu'min* has ever lived in the past nor remained [until today] except that he was afraid of hypocrisy, nor has there ever lived hypocrite nor remained alive [until today] except that he felt secure from hypocrisy." He used to say, "Someone who is not afraid of hypocrisy is a hypocrite."

A man heard Abū'd-Dardā' seeking refuge from hypocrisy in his prayer. When he had finished he asked him, "What is your business with hypocrisy." He said, "O Allah forgiveness!" – three times – "do not feel safe from trial. By Allah! a man will be tried in one moment and he will turn away from his *dīn*." The traditions from the right-acting first generations on this are very many indeed.

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, "The difference between us and the Murji'ah is threefold," and among them he mentioned, "We say, 'Hypocrisy [exists]," and they say, "There is no hypocrisy [today]."

Al-Awzāʿī said, "'ʿUmar feared hypocrisy in himself." Someone said to him, "They say that ʿUmar did not fear being a hypocrite at that time asking Ḥudhayfah for that reason, but he was afraid that he would be tried with that before he died." He said, "This is the position of the people of innovations," indicating that ʿUmar was afraid of hypocrisy in himself at the actual time. Obviously he meant that ʿUmar used to be afraid for himself at the actual time of the lesser hypocrisy, and the lesser hypocrisy is a means leading to major hypocrisy, just as acts of disobedience are the conveyances of *kufr*. So, just as

one fears for someone who perseveres in acts of disobedience that *īmān* will be stripped away from him at death, similarly one fears for someone who persists in the qualities of hypocrisy that *īmān* will be stripped away from him at death and that he will become a complete hypocrite.

Imam Aḥmad was asked, “What do you say about someone who does fear hypocrisy in himself?” He answered, “Who is safe from hypocrisy in himself?” Al-Ḥasan used to call those in whom the practical qualities of hypocrisy were apparent ‘hypocrites’, and the like of that is narrated of Ḥudhayfah.

Ash-Shaʿbī said, “Whoever lies is a hypocrite.” Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī quoted this as the verdict of a group of the people of hadith. We have seen previously in the earlier parts of the book mention of the disagreement between Imam Aḥmad and others about whether someone who does major wrong actions is called a *kāfir* with a *kufr* which does not remove him from the religion or not. The name ‘kufr’ is more serious than the name ‘hypocrisy’, and perhaps it is this which ʿAṭā’ rejected of al-Ḥasan if that is authentically established of him.

One of the most serious qualities of practical hypocrisy is that a person does an action making it appear that he means by it the best, but he does it only so that he can find a means to attain an evil objective which can be fulfilled by it, and by this trickery he obtains his purpose, rejoicing in his plan and his trickery and people's praise for him for what he had outwardly demonstrated and his obtaining by that his wrong purpose which he had concealed. This is something that Allah quotes in the Qur'ān of the hypocrites and the Jews. He quotes about the hypocrites that they:

اتَّخَذُواْ مَسْجِداً ضِرَاراً وَكُفْراً وَتَفْرِيقاً بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَاداً لِّمَنْ حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
مِن قَبْلُ وَلَيَحْلِفَنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلاَّ الْحُسْنَى وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

"...set up a mosque, causing harm and out of *kufr*, to create division between the *mu'minūn*, and in readiness for those who previously made war on Allah and His Messenger, they will swear, 'We only desired the best.' But Allah bears witness that they are truly liars."[32] He revealed about the Jews:

لاَ تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَواْ وَّيُحِبُّونَ أَن يُحْمَدُواْ بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُواْ فَلاَ تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ
مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“Those who exult in what they have done and love to be praised for what they have not done should not suppose that they have escaped the punishment. They will have a painful punishment.”[33] This *āyah* was revealed about the Jews. The Prophet ﷺ asked them about something and they concealed it and informed him [that the case was] other than it. They left and they had shown him that they had informed him of what he asked them about, and they were praised for that, and they rejoiced in what they had been given because of their concealing [the truth] and what they were asked about. Ibn ʿAbbās said that, and his hadith is narrated in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books.[34]

In the two of them also there is from Abū Saʿīd that it [the above verse] was revealed about men of the hypocritics who remained behind, when the Prophet ﷺ went out on a military expedition, and rejoiced about their remaining behind. Then when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from the expedition they made excuses to him and swore oaths and loved that they were praised for what they had not done.[35]

There is in the hadith of Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever deceives us is not one of us, and plotting and trickery are in the Fire.”[36]

Allah describes the hypocrites as using trickery, and Abū'l-ʿAtāhiyyah did well when he said:

> The world is nothing but a debt
> and the *dīn* is only the excellent qualities of character.
> Plotting and trickery are surely in the Fire
> they are the qualities of the people of hypocrisy.

When it was established that in the view of the Companions ﷺ hypocrisy is the discrepancy between the inward secret and the outward public, one of them feared for himself that when the presence of his heart, its softness and humility at hearing the remembrance [of Allah] changed when he returned to the world and being busy with his family, children and properties, that that was hypocrisy in him, as is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Hanẓalah al-Usaydī that he passed by Abū Bakr weeping. He asked, "What is wrong with you?" He said, "Hanẓalah is a hypocrite, Abū Bakr! We are with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as he reminds us of the Garden and the Fire [and] it is as if we see it with our eyes, but then when we return, we are busy with our wives and property, and we forget a great deal." Abū

Bakr said, “By Allah! we are definitely like that!” So the two of them went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he asked, “What is wrong with you, Hanẓalah?” He answered, “Hanẓalah has become a hypocrite, Messenger of Allah,” and he mentioned to him the like of what he had said to Abū Bakr. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “If you were to continue in the state with which you stand up to leave me, the angels would shake hands with you in your gatherings and in your roadways, but, Hanẓalah, an hour [for this] and an hour [for that].”[37]

There is in the *Musnad* of al-Bazzār that Anas said, “They said, ‘Messenger of Allah, we are with you in one state, but when we leave you we are in another.” He said, “How are you with your Lord?” They said, “Allah is our Lord in secret and in public.” He said, “That is not hypocrisy in you.”[38]

It is narrated in another way from Anas that he said, “The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came and said, ‘We are destroyed!’ He said, ‘What is that?’ They said, ‘Hypocrisy, hypocrisy!’ He asked, ‘Do you not witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah?’ They said, ‘Certainly.’ He said, ‘So, that is not hypocrisy.’”[39] Then

he mentioned the meaning of the hadith of Hanẓalah as we saw previously.

1 Al-Bukhārī (33) and Muslim (59)

2 Aḥmad (4:183)

3 Abū Dāwūd (4995) and at-Tirmidhī (2633)

4 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (6186)

5 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (419)

6 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (8:259)

7 Abū Dāwūd in *al-Marāsīl* (522)

8 Abū Dāwūd (4991)

9 Aḥmad (2:452)

10 Al-Bukhārī (6094) and Muslim (2607)

11 Al-Bukhārī (2457) and Muslim (2668)

12 Al-Bukhārī (2680) and Muslim (1713)

13 Al-Bukhārī (5767) and Muslim (869)

14 Abū Dāwūd (3597)

15 Abū Dāwūd (3598)

16 Sūrat an-Naḥl: 91

17 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 77

18 Al-Bukhārī (3188) and Muslim (1735)

19 Muslim (1738)

20 Al-Bukhārī (3166, 6914)

21 Al-Bukhārī (2672) and Muslim (108)

22 Sūrat an-Nisā': 58

23 Abū Dāwūd (3535), at-Tirmidhī (1264) and others

24 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 27

25 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (4:101)

26 Sūrat al-Munāfiqūn: 1

27 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 74-77

28 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 72-73

29 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 77

30 Al-Bukhārī (7178)

31 Aḥmad (5:386, 390)

32 Sūrat at-Tawbah: 107

33 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 188

34 Al-Bukhārī (4568) and Muslim (6778)

35 Al-Bukhārī (4567) and Muslim (6777)

36 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (10234) and *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (738), and Ibn Ḥibbān (5559)

37 Muslim (2750)

38 Al-Bazzār (52)

39 Al-Haythamī in *Majmaʿ az-zawā'id* (10:313)

الحديث التاسع والأربعون

عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ ﷺ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: ﴿لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ تَوَكَّلُونَ عَلَى اللهِ حَقَّ تَوَكُّلِهِ ؛ لَرَزَقَكُمْ كَمَا يَرْزُقُ الطَّيْرَ، تَغْدُو خِمَاصًا، وَتَرُوحُ بِطَانًا﴾. رَوَاهُ الإِمَامُ أَحْمَدُ، وَالتِّرمِذِيُّ، وَالنَّسَائِيُّ، وَابْنُ مَاجَهْ، وَابْنُ حِبَّانَ فِيْ صَحِيْحِه، وَالْحَاكِمُ، وَ قَالَ التِّرْمِذِيُّ: حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ .

Reliance on Allah

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “If you were to rely on Allah as He truly should be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds: they go out in the morning hungry and return in the evening replete.” Imam Aḥmad (1:30, 52), at-Tirmidhī (2344), an-Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah (4164), Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (730), and al-Ḥākim narrated it (4:318). At-Tirmidhī said, “Good sound.”

All of these narrated this hadith in a version of ʿAbdullāh ibn Hubayrah who heard Abū Tamīm al-Jayshānī who heard ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb narrating it

from the Prophet ﷺ. Muslim narrated from both Abū Tamīm and ʿAbdullāh ibn Hubayrah, and more than one person regarded them as trustworthy narrators. Abū Tamīm was born in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and emigrated to Madīnah in the time of ʿUmar ؓ.

This hadith has been narrated in a hadith of Ibn ʿUmar from the Prophet ﷺ but in his chain of transmission there is someone whose state [as a narrator] is unknown, as was said by Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī.

This hadith is a source concerning reliance upon Allah (*tawakkul*) which is one of the greatest means by which provision is procured. Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجاً وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

"Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out and provide for him from where he does not expect. Whoever puts his trust in Allah – He will be enough for him."[1] The Prophet ﷺ recited these *āyāt* to Abū Dharr and said to him, "If all people took their stand on it, it would suffice them," meaning that if they made a reality out of *taqwā* and reliance upon Allah they would be sufficed by that for all the useful

and beneficial things of their *dīn* and their worldly life. We have previously spoken about this meaning in commentary on the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, "Be mindful of Allah and He will be mindful of you."[2]

One of the right-acting first generations said, "It is enough for you as a means of access to Him that He should know of your heart's good reliance upon Him. How many of His slaves hand over the management of their affairs to Him, and He suffices them for that which they are concerned about." Then he recited, "Whoever has *taqwā* of Allah – He will give him a way out and provide for him from where he does not expect." The reality of reliance upon Allah is the truthful dependence of the heart on Allah ﷻ in procuring one's needs and in repelling harm, both in the affairs of the world and those of the *ākhirah*, and entrusting all affairs to Him, and making a reality of one's *īmān* in the fact that no one gives nor refuses, nor harms nor benefits other than Him.

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said, "Reliance comprises all *īmān*."

Wahb ibn Munabbih said, "The furthest limit is reliance."

Al-Ḥasan said, “The slave’s reliance upon his Lord is that he knows that Allah is the One he can trust.”

There is in the hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever would be pleased to be the strongest of people, then let him rely upon Allah.”[3]

It has been narrated from him ﷺ that he used to say in his supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ صِدْقَ التَّوَكُّلِ عَلَيْكَ

“O Allah, I ask you for true reliance upon You,” and that he used to say:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِمَّنْ تَوَكَّلَ عَلَيْكَ فَكَفَيْتَهُ

“O Allah, make me of those who have relied upon You and so You sufficed them.”

Know that the reality of reliance upon Allah does not contradict striving with the means by which Allah has decreed those matters which are decreed, and His Sunnah in His creation proceeds on that basis, because Allah, exalted is He, orders us to take hold of the means as well as ordering us to rely upon him. Thus, exerting oneself with the means with one’s limbs is

obedience towards Him, and relying upon Him in one's heart is *īmān* in Him, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ

"You who have *īmān*! take all necessary precautions,"[4] and He says:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُم مَّا اسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ

"Arm yourselves against them with all the firepower and cavalry you can muster,"[5] and He says:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ

"Then when the *ṣalāh* is finished spread through the earth and seek Allah's bounty."[6]

Sahl at-Tustarī said, "Whoever disapproves of activity," – meaning to work and earn – "disapproves of the Sunnah. Whoever disapproves of reliance [on Allah] disapproves of *īmān*. Reliance is the state of the Prophet ﷺ and earning is his Sunnah. Whoever acts according to his state must not abandon his Sunnah."

The acts which the slave does are in three categories:

First, the acts of obedience with which Allah commands His slaves and which He makes a means to be rescued from the Fire and to enter the Garden. There is no avoiding doing these actions along with relying upon Allah in them and seeking His help in doing them, because there is no strength and no power but by Him, and what Allah wills happens and what He does not will does not happen. Whoever falls short in whatever is obligatory upon him in that deserves punishment in the *dunyā* and the *ākhirah*, both by *Sharīʿah* and by what is decreed. Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said, "It used to be said, 'Do the action of a man whom nothing will save but his action, and rely with the reliance of a man to whom nothing will happen except that which is written for him.'"

Second, what Allah has set as the customary order of things in the world and ordered His slaves to take hold of, such as eating when hungry, drinking when thirsty, seeking the shade during the heat, and warming oneself when cold and the like of those. It is also obligatory on the slave to take hold of the means that lead to these things, and someone who falls short

in it so much so as to harm himself by abandoning them along with his being capable of doing something about them, then he is remiss and deserving of punishment. However, Allah glorious is He, has strengthened some of His slavesin thesematters in ways which He has not strengthened others, so that if someone acts according to the measure of strength which is specific to him as opposed to what others have then thereis no blame upon him. Forth is reason the Prophet ﷺ used to fast uninterruptedly but he forbade his Companions to do that, and he said to them, “I am not like the form of any of you. I am fed and given to drink,”[7] and in another version, “I am always with my Lord; He feeds me and gives me to drink,”[8] and in another version, “I have Someone Who feeds me, and Someone Who gives me to drink.”[9]

The most obvious meaning is that what he meant by that was that Allah strenghtened and nourished him with those pure and sacred openings, divine gifts and Lordly gnoses which descended upon his heart which rendered him in no need of food and drink for long periods of time, as someone said:

> She has talk in remembrance of you which
> occupies her

from drinking and distracts her from her provision.
She finds in your face a light by which she illuminates
the moment of departure and in the subsequent moments it is a camel driver.
When she complains of the burden of travelling the spirit of arrival promises her and so she revives at the promise.

Many of the right-acting first generations used to have such a capacity to give up food and drink as others do not have and they would not be harmed by that. Ibn az-Zubayr used to fast uninterruptedly for eight days. Abū'l-Jawzā' used to fast uninterruptedly for seven days, and then he would [be able to] take hold of the forearm of a young man and almost break it. Ibrāhīm at-Tamīmī would remain two months without eating anything except that he would drink a single draught of something sweet. Ḥajjāj ibn Farāfiṣah would remain more than ten days without eating, drinking or sleeping. Some of them would not care about the heat or the cold, just as ʿAlī ﷺ used to dress in the winter as if it were summer and in the summer as if it were winter, and the Prophet ﷺ had

supplicated for him that Allah would remove heat and cold from him.[10]

So whoever has the strength for these matters and then acts according to his capacity and that does not weaken him for obedience to Allah, then there is no harm in him doing that. But if someone burdens himself with doing that and thus weakens himself so that he cannot discharge some of his duties, he would be reproved for doing that. The right-acting first generations used to reprove ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Nuʿam[11] because he used to give up eating for a period to the extent that he was visited as a sick person because he was so weak.

Third, that which Allah has set as the customary way of things in the world in the main, but He sometimes breaks thatcustomary order for whomever of His slaves He wishes, and this is of many types:

Amongst them are those customary matters which He breaks very often and gives independence from them to many of His creation such as medicaments with respect to many lands and residents of remote country places and the like. The people of knowledge differ as to whether it is better for someone who has fallen ill to be treated with medicines or to to abandon

them in the case of someone who is making a reality out of reliance upon Allah. On this there are two well known positions. The apparent meaning of Aḥmad's words is that reliance is better for whoever is given the strength to do it because of that which is authentically transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "Seventy thousand from among my ummah will enter the Garden without reckoning," and then he said, "They are the ones who do not augur, do not use talismans, do not cauterise and who rely upon their Lord."[12]

Those who prefer that one treat oneself medically say that that was the state of the Prophet ﷺ which he used to do regularly and he would only do that which is best, and they interpret the hadith to refer to the talismans which are disapproved of [which use something other than the words of Allah or *dhikr* of Allah] from which one fears association of partners with Allah, the proof of which is in the fact that it is joined here with cauterisation and augury both of which are disapproved.

Also among them are those [customary norms of creation] which He breaks for a few of the ordinary people such as attaining provision by someone who gives up working to seek it. Someone to whom Allah

provides true certainty and reliance and who knows from Allah that He would break the customary creational modes for him and doesnʊ̀t require him to repair to the customary means in seeking his provision, then it is permissible for him to give up the means and he is not reproved for that. This hadith of ʿUmar about which we are talking shows that, and it shows that people are only given from the littleness of their realisation of reliance and because of their remaining with outward means with their hearts and being comfortable with them, then for that reason they are made to tire themselves out in means and exert themselves in them to the limit of their energies, but only what is decreed for them comes to them. If they had realised reliance upon Allah in their hearts, Allah would have driven their provision to them by the least of means, just as He drives to the birds their provisions by the simple expedient of their going out in the morning and returning in the evening, which is one type of exertion and working, however it is a very slight exertion.

Often someone is prevented from his provision or some of his provision because of a wrong action he does, as there is in the hadith of Thawbān that the

Prophet ﷺ said, “The slave is forbidden provision because of a wrong action he does.”[13]

There is in the hadith of Jābir from the Prophet ﷺ that, “A person will not die until he receives his provision in full, so have *taqwā* of Allah and be moderate in your seeking; take what is *ḥalāl* and leave what is *ḥarām*.”[14]

ʿUmar said, “Between the slave and his provision there is a veil. If he is content and his self is satisfied, his provision comes to him. If he enters into affairs without due thought [by aggressively pursuing his provision] and he rends the veil, he will not increase more than his provision.”[15]

One of the right-acting first generations said, “Rely! and your provision will be driven to you without exhaustion or undertaking hardship.”

Sālim ibn Abī'l-Jaʿd said, "I was told that ʿĪsā ﷺ used to say, 'Act for the sake of Allah and do not act for the sake of your bellies. Beware of the excess of the world, because the excess of the world is filthy to Allah. These birds in the sky go out in the morning and come back in the evening having none of their provision with them, they do not cultivate and they do not harvest and Allah provides for them. If you say that our bellies are bigger than the birds' bellies, yet these animals such as cows and donkeys, etc., go out in the morning and come back in the evening without having anything with them of their provision and they do not cultivate and they do not harvest, but Allah provides for them.'" Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā narrated it.

He narrated with his chain of transmission from Ibn ʿAbbās that he said, "There was a worshipper who worshipped in a cave, and a crow would come to him every day with a loaf of bread in which he would find the taste of every thing, until [the day] that worshipper died."

Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz narrated from one of the shaykhs of Damascus that he said, "When Ilyās fled from his people he resided for twenty nights on a

mountain," – or he said, "forty nights," – "and crows came to him with his provision."

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, "Wāṣil al-Aḥdab recited this *āyah*:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ

'Your provision is in heaven – and what you are promised,'[16] and he said, 'My provision is in heaven and I am seeking it on earth!?' And so he entered a ruin where he remained for three days without finding anything [to eat]. Then when it was the fourth day, suddenly there was a basket made of palm leaves full of dates. He had a brother who had a better intention than him and he went in with him and they became two basketsfull. This continued to be their state of affairs until death separated them."

In this category is someone whose reliance upon Allah and his trust in Him is strong and who enters waterless deserts without travelling provision, for this is permitted to someone of this description but not those who have not reached this rank. In that he has a model in Ibrāhīm the Khalīl ﷺ when he abandoned Hājar and her son Ismāʿīl in an uncultivated valley,

leaving them with a satchel with some dates and a water-container with some water. When Hajar followed him and said to him, “To whom are you leaving us?” He said, “To Allah.” She said, “I am content with Allah.” He did this at the command of Allah and by His revelation. Allah casts into the hearts of some of His close friends true inspiration that they know to be true and which they trust. Al-Marwadhī said, “It was said to Abū ʿAbdullāh [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal], ‘What is true reliance on Allah?’ He answered, ‘That one relies upon Allah while there is no person in one’s heart whom one hopes will bring one something. Then if one is like that, Allah will provide for one and that person is one who relies [on Allah].’”

He said, “I mentioned reliance to Abū ʿAbdullāh and he regarded it as permissible for someone who used it sincerely.”

He said, “I asked Abū ʿAbdullāh about a man who sat in his house saying, ‘I will sit and be patient and I will not let anyone know about it,’ while he is able to earn by the work of his hands, and he said, ‘That he go out and earn by the work of his hands is preferable to me. If he sits I fear that it will drive him to expect that

something will be sent to him.' I said, 'If something is sent to him, [is it that] he should not take it?' He answered, 'This is good.'

"I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh, 'A man in Makkah said, "I will not eat anything until they feed me," and he entered the mountain of Abū Qubays. Two men came to him, and his lower body was dressed in a rag, so they threw a long shirt to him, took him by his hands and dressed him in the long shirt, and they put something before him, but he did not eat until they had put an iron key in his mouth and began to insert it with force. Abū ʿAbdullāh laughed and became amazed.'

"I said to Abū ʿAbdullāh, 'A man has given up buying and selling, and has imposed upon himself that neither gold nor silver should fall into his hand, and has given up his buildings and does not give any command about them. He used to pass along the street and if he saw something cast away he took it from whatever had been thrown away.'" Al-Marwadhi said, "I said to the man, 'Have you any proof for doing this other than Abū Muʿāwiyah al-Aswad?' He said, 'Rather, Uways al-Qarnī. He used to pass by the rubbish-heaps and pick up patches of cloth.'" He said,

“Abū ʿAbdullāh affirmed him and he said, ‘He has been severe on himself.’ Then he said, ‘Al-Baqlī and the like of him came to me, and I said to them, “If you were to engage in action you would make yourselves well known.” He said, “Why should we care about fame?”’”

Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Ḥassān narrated from Aḥmad that he was asked about a man who goes to Makkah without travelling provision, and he said, “If you are able [to do so, then well and good] but if not, then not without travelling provision and a mount. Do not expose yourself to danger.” Abū Bakr al-Khallāl said, “He meant that if one is able to and is strong enough to do that and he will not beg, and his self will not be eager to take or be given something and accept it, then he is someone who relies sincerely, and the people of knowledge permit sincere reliance.” He said, “Abū ʿAbdullāh performed the Ḥajj, and fourteen dirhams sufficed his Ḥajj.”

Isḥāq ibn Rāhwayh was asked, “May a man enter waterless deserts without travelling provision?” and he answered, “If the man is like ʿAbdullāh ibn Munīr then he may enter waterless deserts without travelling provision, but if not then he may not do so. As long as

a man is weak and afraid for himself that he cannot be patient or that he might turn to begging, or that he might fall into doubt and discontentment, then it is not permitted to him to abandon the means at that time." He condemned severely, just as did Imam Aḥmad and others, someone giving up earning and someone entering waterless deserts without travelling provision who feared for himself that he might turn to begging. It has been narrated that Ibn ʿAbbās said, "The people of Yemen used to perform the Ḥajj without travelling provisions and they would say, 'We are relying [upon Allah].' They would set out for Ḥajj and visit Makkah and then beg from people, so Allah revealed this *āyah*:

وَتَزَوَّدُوا۟ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ ٱلزَّادِ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ

'Take provision; but the best provision is *taqwā* of Allah.'[17]"[18] Mujāhid, ʿIkrimah, an-Nakhaʿī and more than one of the right-acting first generations held similar views. A concession is not granted to anyone to abandon the means entirely except to someone whose heart is entirely cut off from anticipating anything from created beings.

It has been narrated of Aḥmad that he was asked about reliance and he said, “To desist from eager expectation by means of despairing of people.” He was asked what his proof was for that, and he said, “The saying of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام when Jibrīl came to him when he had been thrown in the fire, and asked him, ‘Do you have any need?’ and he said, ‘As for from you, then no!’”

The apparent meaning of Aḥmad’s saying is that eaning is better in every case, because he was asked about someone who sits and does not earn saying, “I rely upon Allah,” and he said, “All people have to rely upon Allah, but they should habituate themselves to earn.”

Al-Khallāl narrated with his chain of transmission from al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ that someone said to him, “What if a man sits in his house claiming that he trusts Allah and so He will give him his provision?” He answered, “If he trusts in Allah so much so that He knows about him that he [truly] trusts in Him, He will not refuse him anything he wants, but the prophets and others did not do this. The prophets used to work for pay, and the Prophet ﷺ used to make himself work for pay [before Islam] as did Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, and

they did not say, “We will sit until Allah ﷻ provides for us.” Allah ﷻ says:

وَابْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ

“and seek Allah’s bounty.”[19] There is no escaping seeking one’s livelihood.

It has been narrated of Bishr what could be perceived as the opposite of this. Abū Nuʿaym narrated in *al-Ḥilyah* that Bishr was asked about reliance and he said, “Agitation without stillness, and stillness without agitation.” The questioner said to him, “Explain this to us so that we can understand it.” Bishr said, “Agitation without stillness is the man who is agitated [i.e. active] in his limbs while his heart is still towards Allah but not in respect of his action.[20] Stillness without agitation is the man who is still towards Allah without movement, and this is rare and one of the attributes of the Abdāl.”

In any case, someone who has not reached these exalted stations must be concerned with the means particularly if he has dependants who are unable to be patient. The Prophet ﷺ said, “It is sufficient wrong action for a man that he should cause those whom he

feeds to perish."[21] Bishr used to say, "If I had dependents I would work and earn."

It is similar with someone who because of his abandoning means wastes a right of his and he is not contented with the loss of his right, because this is a weak person who is remiss. On the like of this we have the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "The strong *mu'min* is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak *mu'min*, but in both there is good. Be eager for that which will benefit you and seek the help of Allah and do not be incapable. If something happens to you, do not say, 'If only I had done such and such!' but say, 'Allah decreed and what He willed He did,' because 'if only' opens the working of *shayṭān*." Muslim narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Abū Hurayrah.[22]

There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd from ʿAwf ibn Mālik that the Prophet ﷺ gave a judgement between two men, and that the man against whom the judgement was given said as he went away, "Allah is sufficient for us and excellent as a guardian." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah blames [one] for incapacity, but you must have an acute use of the intellect, and then if a matter goes against you, say, 'Allah is enough for me and excellent as a guardian.'"[23]

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Anas that he said, “A man said, ‘Messenger of Allah, should I hobble it and rely, or should I release it and rely.’ He answered, ‘Hobble it and rely.’”[24] It is mentioned of Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān that he said, “According to me this hadith is rejected [or unknown].” Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated it in a hadith of ʿAmr ibn Umayyah from the Prophet ﷺ.[25]

Al-Waḍīn ibn ʿAṭā’ narrated from Mahfūẓ ibn ʿAlqamah ibn ʿĀ’idh that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Reliance is after use of the intellect,”[26] and this is a *mursal* hadith, and it means that man makes intelligent use of the intellect and he exerts himself with those means which are permissible, and then he relies upon Allah after his exertion. All of this indicates that reliance does not negate using means, but that on the contrary both together are better. Muʿāwiyah ibn Qurrah said, “‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb met some people from the Yemen, and he asked, ‘Who are you?’ They replied, ‘We are those who rely [*mutawakkilūn*].’ He said, ‘On the contrary you are the self-consumed [*muta’akkilūn*]. The one who relies is in fact he who casts his seed on the earth and relies on Allah ﷻ.’”[27]

Al-Khallāl said, “Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Manṣūr said, ‘Al-Mazini asked Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith

about reliance and he said, “The one who relies does not rely upon Allah in order to obtain sufficiency. If this story were to reside in the hearts of those who rely, they would cry out impatiently to Allah with regret and *tawbah*. But the one who relies, his sufficiency descends upon his hear from Allah, blessed is He and exalted, and so he affirms Allah ﷻ to that which He guarantees.”” The meaning of these words is that the one who relies upon Allah ﷻ with true reliance does not produce reliance and make it a means to obtain sufficiency for himself from Allah in terms of provision and other things, because if he did that he would be just like someone who uses all the other means to attract provision and sufficiency to himself, and this would be a type of shortcoming in reliance.

The one who truly relies is in fact the one who knows that Allah has guaranteed His slave his provision and sufficiency, and he affirms Allah as true to what He has guaranteed him, and he is trusting in his heart, and he makes a reality of dependence upon Him concerning that provision which He provides him without making reliance merely one of the means to draw his provision. Provision is pre-ordained for

everyone, whether right-acting or wrong-acting, *mu'min* or *kāfir*, as Allah, exalted is He, says:

وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي الأَرْضِ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

"There is no creature on the earth which is not dependent upon Allah for its provision."[28] And this is along with the weakness of many creatures and their incapacity to exert themselves in search of their provision. He says, exalted is He:

وَكَأَيِّن مِن دَآبَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ

"How many creatures do not carry their provision with them! Allah provides for them and He will for you."[29]

As long as the slave remains alive, his provision is dependent upon Allah and sometimes He makes it easy for him with earning and [sometimes] without earning. So whoever relies upon Allah to acquire provisions has made reliance a means and a form of earning livelihood while someone who relies upon Him because he trusts His guarantee, has relied upon him out of trust and belief in Him. How beautiful is

the saying of Muthannā al-Anbārī who was one of the formost companions of Imam Aḥmad: “Do not have doubt in that which has been guaranteed so that you [end up] doubtful of the Guarantor and displeased with His provision. “

Know that the outcome of reliance is contentment with the Decree. So whoever entrusts his affairs to Allah and is content with what He decrees for him and what He chooses for him, has made a reality of his reliance upon Him. For that reason, al-Ḥasan and Fuḍayl and others used to explain reliance upon Allah as contentment (*riḍā*).

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā said, “It has reached me that one of the wise people said, ‘Reliance has three degrees, first: giving up complaining; second: contentment; third: love. Giving up complaining is the degree of steadfastness. Contentment is the tranquility of the heart towards that which is decreed for one, and that is higher than the former. Love is that one’s love is for that which Allah does with one. The first is the degree of those who do without (*zāhidūn*). The second is that of the truthful (*ṣādiqūn*). The third is that of the messengers.”

If the one who relies upon Allah is patient with whatever provision and other things Allah decrees for him, then he is steadfast. If he is pleased with whatever is decreed for him after it happens, then he is content. If he has entirely no choice nor any contentment except with that which has been decreed for him, then that is the rank of the lovers who are gnostics, as ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to say, "I have become such that I only have happiness in the places of the general and specific decrees (qaḍā wa qadr)."

1 Sūrat aṭ-Ṭalāq: 2-3

2 No. 19

3 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *at-Tawakkul* (9)

4 Sūrat an-Nisā': 71

5 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 60. More literally: "And prepare yourselves against them with all the power and cavalry you can muster." Ed.

6 Sūrat al-Jumuʿah: 10

7 Al-Bukhārī (1922), Muslim (1102) and Abū Dāwūd (2360)

8 Al-Bukhārī (1966) and Muslim (1103)

9 Al-Bukhārī (1963) and Abū Dāwūd (2361)

10 Aḥmad (1:99, 133) and Ibn Mājah (117)

11 In the text of Dar al-Bayan al-Arabi, it is ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam. Trans.

12 Muslim (218)

13 Aḥmad (5:277, 280, 282)

14 Ibn Mājah (2144) and al-Ḥākim (2:4)

15 This means that in both cases the person gets his provision but the former gets it happily and with contentment while the latter gets the same provision that is due to him but through aggressive pursuit, hard work and discontentment. Ed.

16 Sūrat ad-Dhāriyāt: 22

17 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 197

18 Al-Bukhārī (1523)

19 Sūrat al-Jumuʿah: 10

20 So this person's heart is at peace with Allah in his *īmān* and reliance on Him but he couples that with positive action in earning his livelihood. Ed.

21 Abū Dāwūd (1692) and Muslim (996) with slight different wording

22 Muslim (2664)

23 Abū Dāwūd (3627)

24 At-Tirmidhī (2517)

25 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* as mentioned in *Majmaʿ az-zawā'id* (10:303). It is also narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān (731) and al-Ḥākim (3:623)

26 Ad-Daylamī in *Musnad al-Firdaws* (2435)

27 Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā in *at-Tawakkkul* (10)

28 Sūrah Hūd: 6. Or, “There is no creature on earth but its provision depends upon Allah.”

29 Sūrat al-ʿAnkabūt: 60

الحديث الخمسون

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ بُسْرٍ ﷺ، قَالَ: أَتَى النَّبِيَّ ﷺ رَجُلٌ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ! إِنَّ شَرَائِعَ الإِسْلامِ قَدْ كَثُرَتْ عَلَيْنَا، فَبَابٌ نَتَمَسَّكُ بِهِ جَامِعٌ؟ قَالَ: ﴿لا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ﴾. خَرَّجَه الإِمامُ أَحْمَدُ بِهَذَا اللَّفْظِ.

Remembrance of Allah

ʿAbdullāh ibn Busr said, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Messenger of Allah, the laws of Islam have become too many for us, so [give us] a means of access to which we can cling which is comprehensive.’ He said, ‘Let not your tongue cease to be moist with the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.’” Imam Aḥmad narrated it with this wording.

At-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Ibn Ḥibbān, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated it in the same sense, and at-Tirmidhī said, “Good but unusual [in that there is a single narrator at some point in the chain of transmission].” All of them narrated it in the version of ʿAmr ibn Qays al-Kindī from ʿAbdullāh ibn Busr.[1]

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and others, the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that he he said, “The last thing upon which I parted from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is that I said to him, ‘Which actions are better and closer to Allah?’ He answered, ‘That you die while your tongue is moist with the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.’”[2]

In this book we have previously seen in different places a great deal of mention of the excellences of remembrance, and here we will mention the merit in persisting in it and being constant in it, and in doing a great deal of it.

Allah, glorious is He, orders the *mu’minūn* to remember Him a great deal and praises those who remember Him in that way. He says, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“You who have *īmān*! remember Allah much, and glorify Him in the morning and the evening,”[3] and He says, exalted is He:

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“and remember Allah much so that hopefully you will be successful,”[4] and He says, exalted is He:

وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيراً وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْراً عَظِيماً

“men and women who remember Allah much: Allah has prepared forgiveness for them and an immense reward,”[5] and He says, exalted is He:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَاماً وَقُعُوداً وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ

“those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides.”[6]

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed a mountain called Jumdān and said, “Travel! This is Jumdān, and the utterly devoted (*mufarridūn*) have preceded.” They asked, “Who are the utterly devoted, Messenger of Allah?” He replied, “The men and women who remember Allah abundantly.”[7]

Imam Aḥmad narrated it and his wording has, “The utterly devoted have preceded.” They asked, “Who are the utterly devoted?” He answered, “The ones who are addicted to the remembrance of Allah.”[8]

At-Tirmidhī narrated it, and according to him they said, “Messenger of Allah, who are the utterly devoted?” He answered, “Those who are addicted to the remembrance of Allah. The remembrance removes from them their heavy burdens and so they come light on the Day of Rising.”[9]

Mūsā ibn ʿUbaydah narrated from Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Qarrāẓ that Muʿādh ibn Jabal said, “Once while we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passing by the side of Jumdan he became alert and said, ‘Muʿādh! where are the forerunners (*sābiqūn*)?’ I replied, ‘They have gone on, and some people remain behind.’ He said, ‘Muʿādh, the forerunners are those who are addicted to the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.”[10] Jaʿfar al-Firyābī narrated it.

The reason for the mention of the forerunners in this hadith becomes clear from this thread (in the hadith just mentioned), because when the riders went on ahead and some remained behind, the Prophet ﷺ drew attention to the fact that the forerunners in reality are the ones who are constant in remembrance of Allah so much so that they are hardly able to separate from His remembrance. This is because addiction to some thing (*istihtār*) is to be devoted to it

and passionately in love with it. This is according to the version of those who narrate it as “addicted” (*mustahtirūn*), and one of them narrated it and in it he said, “the ones who lose their reason [*yuhtarūn*] in remembrance of Allah.” Ibn Qutaybah explained *hatr* as a mistake in speech, as it is in the hadith, “Those who revile one another are two shaytans who accuse one another and deny one another by saying false things [*yatahātarān*].”[11]

He said, “What is meant by this hadith is someone whose life is lengthened and he becomes addicted to the remembrance of Allah and to His obedience.” He said, “What is meant by the utterly devoted (*mufarridūn*) in this version is someone who secludes himself in his life away from the generation in which he lives. As for the first version, the meaning of the utterly devoted is those who are isolated from people by the remembrance of Allah, exalted is He.” That is what he said. It is possible – and more obvious – that the meaning of being singled out in both versions is that one is singled out by this action which is much remembrance of Allah and not being singled out physically, either from the generation or from mingling, and Allah knows best.

On this same meaning, there is the saying of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz on the night of ʿArafah at ʿArafah close to departure [to Muzdalifah], “The forerunner today is not someone who rode ahead with his camel, but the forerunner is whoever is forgiven.”

With this chain of transmission from the Prophet ﷺ he said, “Whoever wishes to graze in the meadows of the Garden then let him do a great deal of remembrance of Allah ﷻ.”[12]

Imam Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* narrated a hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Seek to do a lot of the ‘right actions which are lasting.’[13]” Someone said, “What are they, Messenger of Allah?” He said:

“*Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater, *Subḥāna’llāh* – Glory be to Allah, *lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god but Allah and *al-ḥamdu lillāh* – praise belongs to Allah, and *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* – there is no power and no strength but by Allah.”[14]

There is in the *Musnad* and in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī also from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Do so much *dhikr* of Allah that they say, ‘[He is] mad.’”[15]

Abū Nuʿaym narrated in *al-Ḥilyah* a *marfūʿ* hadith of Ibn ʿAbbās, “Remember Allah with so much remembrance that the hypocrites will say, ‘You are doing it for show.’”[16]

Imam Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhī narrated in a hadith of Abū Saʿīd that the Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Which slaves have the best rank with Allah on the Day of Rising?” He said, “The ones who remember Allah a great deal.” Someone said, “Messenger of Allah, [better] than the one who goes on expeditions in the way of Allah?” He said, “Even if he struck with his sword among the *kuffār* and the idolaters until it was broken and covered with blood, those who remember Allah would be in a better rank than him.”[17]

Imam Aḥmad narrated a hadith of Sahl ibn Muʿādh [from his father] from the Prophet ﷺ that a man asked him saying, “Which *jihād* is greater in reward, Messenger of Allah?” He answered, “The one of them who most remembers Allah.” He said, “Which of the fasting people is greater?” He said, “The one of them who most remembers Allah.” Then he mentioned to us the prayer, the *zakāh*, the Ḥajj and *ṣadaqah*, about each of which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The one of them who most remembers Allah.” So Abū Bakr

said, “Abū Ḥafṣ, the people of remembrance [of Allah] have gone off with every good thing.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Indeed.”[18]

Ibn al-Mubārak and Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated it in other ways as a *mursal* hadith in the same sense.

There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from ʿĀ’ishah that she said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to remember Allah at every moment.”[19]

Abū’d-Dardā’ said, “Those whose tongues remain moist with the remembrance of Allah, each of them will enter the Garden laughing.” Someone said to him, “A man has freed one hundred souls.” He said, “A hundred souls from a man’s property is a great deal, but better than that is an *īmān* to which one clings night and day, and that the tongue of each of you remains moist with the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.”

Muʿādh said, “That I should remember Allah from early in the morning until the night is preferable to me than that I should be carried on fine horses in the way of Allah from early in the morning until the night.”[20]

Ibn Masʿūd said concerning His saying, exalted is He:

اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ

"have *taqwā* of Allah with the *taqwā* due to Him,"[21] "That He is obeyed and not disobeyed, remembered and not forgotten, shown gratitude and not shown ingratitude." Al-Ḥākim narrated it as a *marfūʿ* hadith and declared it to be sound, but the well known position is that it is a *mawqūf* statement.

Zayd ibn Aslam said, "Mūsā ﷺ said, 'My Lord, You have poured out many blessings upon me, so show me how to thank you a great deal." He said, "Remember Me a great deal, for when you remember Me a great deal you have shown gratitude to Me a great deal. When you forget Me, you have been ungrateful to Me."

Al-Ḥasan said, "The most beloved of the slaves of Allah to Allah are those who remember Him the most and whose hearts have the most *taqwā*."

Aḥmad ibn Abi'l-Ḥawārī said, "Abū'l-Mukhāriq narrated to me saying, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'I passed a man, on the night in which I was made to ascend (al-Isrā'), who was concealed in the light of the Throne, and I said, "Who is this? An angel?" Someone said, "No." I asked, "A prophet?" Someone said, "No." I asked, "Who is he?" He said, "This is a man whose tongue was moist with the

remembrance of Allah, and whose heart was attached to the mosques, and who never abused his parents.""""[22]

Ibn Masʿūd said, "Mūsā ﷺ said, 'Lord, which actions are the most beloved to You that I should do?' He said, 'That you remember Me and not forget Me.'"

Abū Isḥāq said [narrating] from Mītham, "It has reached me that Mūsā ﷺ said, 'Lord, which of Your slaves are most beloved to You?' He answered, 'Those of them who most remember Me.'"

Kaʿb said, "Whoever remembers Allah a great deal is free of hypocrisy." And Mu'ammal narrated it from Ḥammād ibn Salamah from Suhayl ibn Ṣāliḥ from his father from Abū Hurayrah as a *marfūʿ* hadith.[23]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī narrated with his chain of transmission as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever does not remember Allah a great deal is quit of *īmān*,"[24] and what bears witness to this sense is that Allah, exalted is He, describes the hypocrites as only remembering Allah a little. So whoever remembers Allah a great deal has become distinctly clear from them in their description, and it is for this reason that Sūrat al-Munāfiqūn is concluded with the order to remember Allah, and that neither property nor children should distract the *mu'min* from

that, and that whoever is distracted by them from the remembrance of Allah is one of the losers.

Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Anas said, as [narrated by] one of his companions, “The sign of the love of Allah is that there is a great deal of remembrance of Him, because if you ever love a thing you remember it a great deal.”

Fatḥ al-Mawṣilī said, “The lover of Allah does not neglect the remembrance of Allah for the blink of an eye.” Dhu’n-Nūn said, “Whoever’s heart and tongue are occupied with remembrance, Allah casts into his heart the light of longing for Him.”

Ibrāhīm ibn al-Junayd said, “It used to be said, ‘One of the signs of love of Allah is being continuous in remembrance with the heart and the tongue. Rarely is a man passionate about remembrance of Allah ﷻ without him benefitting from it the love of Allah.’” One of the right-acting first generations used to say in his intimate discourse [with Allah], “When the foolish people weary of their folly, your lover will never weary of intimate discourse with You and remembrance of You.”

Abū Jaʿfar al-Muḥawwalī said, “The heart of the close friend of Allah who loves Allah is never free of remembrance of his Lord, and is never weary of His

service." We have mentioned the saying of ʿĀ'ishah, "The Prophet ﷺ used to remember Allah at every moment," meaning when he stood, walked, sat and reclined, whether he was in the state of *wuḍū'* or not.

Misʿar said, "The fish in the sea would rest and be still, but Yūsuf عليه السلام in the prison would not rest and be still from the remembrance of Allah ﷻ."

Abū Hurayrah had a thread in which there were one thousand knots and he would not sleep until he had glorified [Allah] on it.[25]

Khālid ibn Maʿdān used to glorify every day forty thousand times apart from what he used to recite of the Qur'ān. When he died they put him on his couch to wash him, and he began to indicate with his finger moving it in glorification.

Someone said to ʿUmayr ibn Hāni', "We do not see your tongue pausing. How much do you glorify every day?" He said, "One hundred thousand glorifications, unless the fingers make a mistake," meaning that he used to count that with his fingers.

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawwad said, "There was a woman with us in Makkah who used to glorify every day twelve thousand glorifications. Then she died.

When [her body] reached the graveyard, it was snatched from out of the men's hands."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī used often to say if he was not discoursing or he had no work:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

"Glorious is Allah the Vast." Someone mentioned that to one of the *fuqahā*' of Makkah and he said, "Your companion is a *faqīh*; no one says it seven times but that a house is built for him in the Garden."

Generally the speech of Ibn Sīrīn was:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

"Glorious is Allah the Vast, glory be to Allah and in His praise."

Al-Mughīrah ibn Ḥakīm aṣ-Ṣanʿānī used to descend to the sea when eyes were still [in sleep] and stand in the water remembering Allah with the creatures of the sea."

One of them slept at Ibrāhīm ibn Adham's. He said, "Whenever I woke up at night, I found him

remembering Allah, and I became sorrowful.[26] Then later I consoled myself with this *āyah*:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ

"That is the unbounded favour of Allah which He gives to whoever He wills."[27]

For the lover, the name of his beloved is not absent from his heart, and even if he was charged with the task of forgetting to remember Him he would not be able. If he was charged with restraining his tongue from His remembrance he could not be patient.

> How could the lover forget the mention of a beloved,
> whose name is written in his heart?

When the idolaters tortured Bilāl in the hot desert because of his *tawḥīd*, he would say, "*Aḥad! Aḥad!* – One! One!" When they said to him, "Say, '*Al-lāt* and *al-ʿuzzā*[28]," he said, 'I do not know it well.'"

> What is desired of the heart is your forgetfulness
> and the temperaments refuse the transmitter.

Whenever the *maʿrifah* (gnosis) is strong, the remembrance flows on the tongue of the rememberer without constraint, so much so that for one of them his tongue used to flow with, “Allah, Allah,” in his sleep. For that reason the people of the Garden are inspired to make glorification just asthey areinspired to breathe, and “*lā ilāha illa’llāh* – There is no god but Allah,” for them becomes as cool water is for the people of the world. Ath-Thawrī used to recite:

> It is not because I forget You that I do a great
> deal of Your *dhikr*
> but because that is what runs on my tongue.

When the lover hears the name of his beloved from somone else it increases his agitation, and his disquiet is multiplied. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn Masʿūd, “Recite the Qur’ān to me.” He asked, “Should I recite it to you when it was revealed to you?” He answered, “I love to hear it from someone other than me.” So he recited to him and his eyes overflowed with tears.[29]

Ash-Shiblī heard someone saying, “O Allah! O Generous Giver!” and he became agitated:

And a caller called when we were in Khayf of
Minā
and he agitated the sadnesses of the heart and
he does not know.
He called by the name Laylā someone other than
her and it
was as if he made a bird that was in my breast
fly off with Laylā.
The pulse becomes disturbed at the mention of
the beloved:
When the beloved is mentioned in the presence
of his lover,
The intoxicated one reels and the emotions are
stirred with yearning.

The remembrance of the lovers is different from the remembrance of the heedless:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

"The *mu'minūn* are those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned."[30]

A liveliness comes to me from the remembrance
of you,

just as the sparrow trembles whom the rain wets it.

One of the seven whom Allah shades in His shade on the day when there is no shade but His shade is, “A man who remembered Allah while alone and his eyes overflowed with tears.”

Abū’l-Jild said, “Allah ﷻ revealed to Mūsā ﷺ ‘When you remember Me, then remember with your limbs trembling, and at My remembrance be humble and still. When you remember Me put your tongue behind your heart.’”

ʿAlī described the Companions one day, saying, “When they remembered Allah, they would become in a state of violent commotion as do the trees on a day of strong winds, and their tears would flow on to their clothing.”

Zuhayr al-Bābī, “Allah has slaves who remember Him and whose souls leave [their bodies] out of exaltation and longing; and there are people who remember Him and whose hearts tremble out of fear and awe so that even if they were burned with fire they would not experience the burning of the fire; and there are others who remember Him in the winter in all its coldness, and break out in a sweat for fear of

Him, and people who remember Him and so their colours change permanently, and people who remember Him and their eyes dry from remaining awake throughout the night."

Abū Yazīd prayed *Ẓuhr*, but when he meant to say the "*Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater" he was unable because of his honour for the name of Allah and violent fear siezed him so much that the clatter of his bones was heard.

When Abū Ḥafṣ an-Naysabūrī remembered Allah, his state used to change so much that everyone who was with him could see it, and he used to say, "I do not think that a truthful person remembers Allah without neglectfulness and then remains alive except for the prophets, because they are aided by the strength of prophethood, and the elect of the close friends [of Allah] because of the strength of their close friendship."

When she heard the name of the Beloved her
joints
clattered because of the shock of what she
remembers.

Abū Yazīd stood one night until the morning exerting himself in trying to say, "*lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah," but unable to do so because of his great honour [for Him] and awe. When it was morning he came down and urinated blood.

I have never remembered you without forgetting you
with the forgetfulness of honouring but not the forgetfulness of neglect.
Since I remember who you are and how I honoured the likes of you, it occurs to my mind.

Remembrance is the delight of the hearts of the gnostics. He says ﷻ:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"those who have *īmān* and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace."[31] Mālik ibn Dīnār said, "Pleasure seekers find no pleasure like the remembrance of Allah ﷻ."

In some of the ancient books, Allah ﷻ says, “Assembly of the truthful, in Me rejoice, and with My remembrance find pleasure.” In another tradition which we mentioned before, “They return to remembrance just as eagles return to their nests.”

Ibn ʿUmar said, “The people of the Book informed me that this ummah loves remembrance just as the pigeon loves its nest, and that they are quicker in going to remembrance of Allah than are camels to go to the water on the day when they are thirsty.”

The hearts of the lovers are only tranquil with His remembrance, and the spirits of the people of longing are only still by seeing Him. Dhu’n-Nūn said, “The world is only sweet with His remembrance, and the next life is only sweet with His pardon, and the Garden is only sweet with His vision.”

Always the souls of seekers
long for your traces.
Similarly, hearts by your remembrance
after fear find stillness.
They are shielded by your love, and who
falls in love with the beloved without being
shielded?
By your lives! my masters

be generous regards joining you and grant it.
We have previously seen the hadith, “Remember
Allah so much that
they say, ‘[He is] mad!’” One of them said:
I have done a great deal of your remembrance
so much so that someone said, “[He is]
melancholic [*waswās*]!”

Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī used to do *dhikr* a great deal, and a man saw him and rejected his state. He said to his companions, “Is your friend mad?” Abū Muslim overheard him and he said, “No, my brother, but this is the remedy for madness.”

By the sanctity of love! I have no substitute for
you,
and I have no goal in other than you, my
masters.
I stipulated to some people whom I
accompanied,
that my heart is for you not for them and
they were contented.
From my talking about you they said, “He is
sick!”

and so I said, “May that sickness never leave me.”

The lovers are averse to every occupation which keeps them busy from remembrance, for no thing is more beloved to them than isolation with their beloved.

ʿĪsā ﷺ said, “Ḥawāriyyūn! speak to Allah a great deal, and speak to people little.” They asked, “How can we speak to Allah a great deal?” He said, “Isolate yourself in intimate discourse with Him. Isolate yourself in supplication to Him.”

One of the right-acting first generations used to pray one thousand *rakʿahs* every day until his legs were crippled. Then he used to pray one thousand *rakʿahs* sitting. When he prayed *ʿAṣr* he would crouch drawing his legs close to his belly, face the *qiblah* and say, “I am amazed at how people can be intimate with other than You. Indeed, I am amazed at how people’s hearts can light up by the remembrance of other than You.”

One of them used to fast continually, and then when it came time for breaking his fast, he would say, “I sense my self emerging because of my being occupied in the remembrance of food.”

Someone asked Muḥammad ibn an-Naḍr, “Are you not lonely by yourself?” He answered, “How could I be lonely when He says, ‘I sit with whoever remembers Me’?”[32]

I concealed the name of the beloved from the slaves
and I renewed the tenderness of love in my heart.
Oh my longing for an empty land
so that I might call on the name of the one I love.

When the state of the lover and his gnosis become strong, no occupation keeps him too busy to remember with his heart and tongue. So he is among people in his body, but his heart is attached to the highest locus, as ʿAlī said ﷺ in describing them, “They accompany the world with bodies whose spirits are attached to the highest locus.” In this sense it was said:

My body is with me but the *rūḥ* is with you
so the body is in exile and the *rūḥ* is in its homeland.

Someone else said:

I have put you in the heart as the one I talk to
and I have permitted my body for whoever
wishes to sit with me.
My body is an intimate companion for whoever
sits with me
and the lover of my heart is my intimate in
my heart.

This was the state of the messengers and the *ṣiddīqūn*. He says, exalted is He:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيراً لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"You who have *īmān*! when you meet a troop, stand firm and remember Allah abundantly."[33]

There is in at-Tirmidhī as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave, My true slave is the one who remembers Me while he meets his match [in battle].'"[34]

He says, exalted is He:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلاَةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَاماً وَقُعُوداً وَعَلَى جُنُوبِكُمْ

"When you have finished *ṣalāh* remember Allah standing, sitting and lying on your sides,"[35] meaning

the prayer in the state of fear. For this reason He says:

فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

"When you are safe again do *ṣalāh* in the normal way."[36] He says, exalted is He, in mention of the prayer of Jumuʿah:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"Then when the *ṣalāh* is finished spread through the earth and seek Allah's bounty and remember Allah much so that hopefully you will be successful."[37] and so He commands that we combine seeking His bounty and much remembrance of Him.

For this reason it is narrated that it is better to remember Allah in the markets and the places of forgetfulness and neglect [of the worship of Allah] as is in the *Musnad, at-Tirmidhī*, and *Sunan Ibn* Mājah from ʿUmar as a *marfūʿ* hadith, "Whoever enters the market in which there is shouting and selling and he says:

لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ، وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لاَ يَمُوتُ ، بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

‘There is no god but Allah alone without associate. His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He gives life and He gives death, and He is living, He does not die. In His hand is the good and He has power to do all things,’ then Allah will write for him one thousand thousand good actions and efface for him one thousand thousand wrong actions, and raise him up one thousand thousand degrees.”[38]

In another hadith, “The one who remembers Allah among neglectful people is like someone who remains fighting while others flee. The one who remembers Allah among neglectful people is like a green tree in the middle of dry trees.”[39]

Abū ʿUbaydah ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd said, “As long as a man’s heart remembers Allah then he is in *ṣalāh* even if he is in the market, and if his lips move with it it is better.”

One of the right-acting first generations used to go intentionally to the market to remember Allah in it in the midst of the people of forgetfulness [of His remembrance].

Two men from among them met in the market and one of them said to his companion, “Come let us remember Allah among the neglectful people,” and they went apart in a place and remembered Allah. Then later they separated. Later one of them died and the other met him in his dream. So he said to him, “I was given to know that Allah forgave us the evening we met in the market.”

SECTION: ON SPECIFIC APPOINTED DHIKRS IN THE DAY AND THE NIGHT

It is well known that Allah ﷻ made it obligatory for the Muslims to remember Him five times every day and night by establishing the five prayers in their prescribed times, and He prescribed for them along with these five obligations that they should remember Him with other optional (*nāfilah*) acts. And optional (*nāfilah*) is extra, so that that should be over and above the five prayers. This is of two sorts:

First, that which is of the same sort as the prayer, and so He laid down that they should pray along with and before the five prayers or after them, or both before and after other Sunnah prayers which are over and above the obligatory prayers, so that if there is any shortcoming in the obligatory prayers He will heal

their shortcomings with these optional prayers, but if there is not [any shortcoming] then the optional prayers will be over and above the obligatory.

The longest space of time between the times of prayer in which there is no obligatory prayer is that between the prayer of *ʿIshā'* and that of *Fajr*, and then that between *Fajr* and the prayer of *Ẓuhr*, and so He laid down between each of these two prayers [other] prayers which would be optional so that the time of forgetfulness of the remembrance [of Allah] should not be too long. He laid down for between the prayer of *ʿIshā'* and *Fajr* the prayer of the *witr* and the standing of the night [in *tahajjud*], and between the prayer of *Fajr* and *Ẓuhr* the prayer of *Ḍuḥā*.

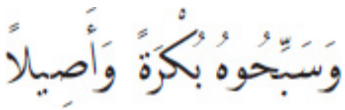
Some of these prayers are more firmly established than others, and the most firmly established is the *witr* – and so the people of knowledge differed as to whether or not it is a duty – and then the standing in prayer at night upon which the Prophet ﷺ persisted both when resident and travelling, and then the prayer of Duha, about which people differ. There are sound hadith about it being preferable to persist and urging that we practise it. There are also [sound hadith]

urging prayer just after the declining of the sun [from the meridian].

As for remembrance with the tongue, it is laid down to be done at every moment, and it is emphasised at some moments.

Examples of times when it is emphasised to remember Allah are: immediately after the obligatory prayers, and that one remember Allah after each prayer of them one hundred times with a mixture of *Subḥāna'llāh* – Glory be to Allah, *al-ḥamdu lillāh* – praise belongs to Allah, *Allahu akbar* – Allah is greater, and *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah.

It is also desirable to remember Him after the two prayers after which there are no optional prayers [allowed], which are the *Fajr* and *ʿAṣr*, and so it is laid down to remember Allah after the prayer of *Fajr* until the sun rises, and after *ʿAṣr* until the sun sets. For this reason, Allah, exalted is He, commands His remembrance in these two times in many places in the Qur'ān, such as in His saying:



“and glorify Him in the morning and the evening,”[40] and His saying:

وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً

“Remember the Name of your Lord in the morning and the evening,”[41] and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالإِبْكَارِ

“glorify Him in the evening and after dawn,”[42] and His saying:

فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيّاً

“and gestured to them to glorify Allah in the morning and the evening,”[43] and His saying:

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ

“So glory be to Allah when you start the night and when you greet the day,”[44] and His saying:

وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ

“Ask forgiveness for your wrong action and glorify your Lord with praise in the evening and the early morning,”[45] and His saying:

وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعاً وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالآصَالِ وَلاَ تَكُن مِّنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

“Remember your Lord in yourself humbly and fearfully, without loudness of voice, morning and evening. Do not be one of the unaware,”[46] and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا

“and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting,”[47] and His saying:

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ

“and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before it sets.”[48]

The best remembrance done at these two times are the prayers of *Fajr* and of *ʿAṣr* which are the best prayers, about each of which it has been said that they

are the midmost prayer, and that they are the two loved ones [lit: cool] which whoever safeguards them will enter the Garden. Next to them in the times of remembrance is the night; for this reason the glorification of the night and its *ṣalāh* are mentioned after the mention of these two times in the Qur'ān.

[When mentioned] without any qualification remembrance includes *ṣalāh*, recitation of the Qur'ān and learning and teaching it, useful knowledge, just as it includes glorification, praise, magnification and *lā ilāha illa'llāh* – There is no god but Allah. Among our companions there are those who regard recitation of Qur'ān as being weightier than glorification and the like after *Fajr* and *ʿAṣr*. Al-Awzāʿī was asked about that and he said, "Their guidance was remembrance of Allah, but if one recites then it is good." The apparent meaning of this is that remembrance at this time is better than recitation, and Isḥāq spoke similarly about glorification right after the obligatory prayers one hundred times, "It is better than recitation at that time." The acts of remembrance and supplications which are transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ for morning and evening are very many.

It is also recommended to fill the time between the two night prayers [*Maghrib* and ʿ*Ishā*'] with prayer and remembrance, and we have seen previously the hadith of Anas that about that was revealed His saying, exalted is He:

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ

"Their sides eschew their beds."[49]

It is recommended to delay the prayer of ʿ*Ishā*' until one third of the night as sound hadith show – and this is the *madhhab* of Imam Aḥmad and others – so that one does this prayer in the best time for it which is the end of its time, and the person who waits for this prayer in congregation in this first third of the night occupies himself in prayer or remembrance waiting for the prayer in the mosque. Then later when he prays ʿ*Ishā*' and he prays after it those established Sunnah prayers which follow it or he performs the *witr* after that if he wishes to do the *witr* before sleeping.

Then when he goes to his bed after that to sleep, then it is recommended for him only to sleep in purity [having done *wuḍū*'] and in remembrance, and to glorify, praise and say *Allāhu akbar* – Allah is greater

to the number of one hundred, as the Prophet ﷺ taught Fāṭimah and ʿAlī to do when they went to bed,[50] and that he should do as much as he is able of the acts of remembrance transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ to be done at sleep, and there are many types including recitation of Qur'ān and remembrance of Allah, and then one should sleep in that state.

Then if one wakes up at night and turns about on one's bed one should remember Allah each time one turns. There is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from ʿUbādah that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever wakes up at night and says:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

'There is no god but Allah alone without associate. His is the kingdom and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things. Glory be to Allah, praise belongs to Allah, there is no god but Allah and Allah is greater, and there is no power and no strength but by Allah,' and then says:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

‘Lord forgive me,’” – or he said, “and then he supplicates, he will be answered. Then if he has a high resolve, performs *wuḍū*’ and prays, his prayer will be accepted.”[51]

There is in at-Tirmidhī from Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever goes to his bed in a state of purity remembering Allah until slumber overcomes him, if he turns over at some hour of the night and asks Allah for anything of the good of the world or the next life, He will give it to him.”[52]

Abū Dāwūd narrated it in the same sense in a hadith of Muʿādh,[53] and anNasā’ī narrated it in a hadith of ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah.[54]

Imam Aḥmad has in the version of ʿAmr ibn ʿAbasah of this hadith, “...and the first of what he says when he wakes up is:

سُبْحَانَكَ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنتَ ، اغْفِرْ لِي

‘Glory be to You! there is no god but You, forgive me,’ then he will emerge out of his wrong actions as the snake emerges out of its skin [which it sheds].”[55]

It is firmly established that when he ﷺ woke up from his sleep, he used to say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانِي بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

“Praise belongs to Allah Who made me live after he made me die, and to Him is the raising to life.”[56]

Then when he stands up and does *wuḍū*’ and *tahajjud*, he does all of that according to what is transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ and concludes his tahajjud by seeking forgiveness in the pre-dawn, as Allah praises those who seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn. Then when it is the dawn, he prays two *rakʿahs* of fajr, and then prays the *Fajr* prayer, and is busy after the *Fajr* prayer with the remembrance which is transmitted until sunrise according to what we have already mentioned. Whoever’s condition is according to what we have mentioned, then his tongue does not cease to be moist with the remembrance of Allah, and he chooses remembrance as a constant companion in his waking moments until he sleeps in that condition, and then begins again with it when he wakes up, and that is one of the sure indications of sincere love, as one of them said:

The last thing is You at every slumber

and the first thing is You at the moment
when I stir.

The first thing that a person does throughout the day and the night of those things which are of benefit in his *dīn* and in his world, then in all of that generally it is laid down that he should remember the name of Allah over it. Thus it is laid down that he should remember the name of Allah over his eating and drinking, his dressing, and his sexual intercourse with his wife, his entering his house and his going out of it, his entering the toilet and leaving it, his mounting his riding beast and he should mention the name of Allah over that which he slaughters both in his rites and elsewhere; he should praise Allah, exalted is He, when he sneezes, and when he sees people who are tried in their *dīn* or in their worldly life, when he meets brothers, and when they ask each other about how they are, and in the renewal of blessings that people love and in the repulsion of misfortunes that people dislike. More perfect than that is that he should praise Allah in happiness and hardship, distress and in comfortable circumstances, and that he should praise Allah in every state.

He should supplicate Allah, exalted is He, when he enters the market, when he hears the cock crowing at night, when he hears thunder, when it rains, when heavy gales blow, when he sees the new moon and when he sees the first fruits.

He should also remember Allah and supplicate him when something distressful happens, and when worldly hardships happen, when he goes out on a journey, and when he alights at stations on his journey and when he returns from a journey.

He ought to seek refuge with Allah when he becomes angry, and when he sees something he dislikes in his sleep, and when he hears the voices of dogs and donkeys at night.

He should supplicate Allah to choose what is good for him [with the *istikhārah*] when he is deciding on that in which the choice (or good) is not obvious.

It is a duty to turn in *tawbah* to Allah and to seek forgiveness from all wrong actions, whether minor or major, as He says, exalted is He:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ

“those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for

their bad actions."[57] Whoever safeguards all of that, then his tongue will continuously be moist with the remembrance of Allah in all of his states.

SECTION ON CONCISE COMPREHENSIVE DHIKRS

We have mentioned in the beginning of the book that the Prophet ﷺ was sent with concise and comprehensive words. So he ﷺ was pleased by and admired concise and comprehensive [words of] remembrance and would choose them in preference to other types of remembrance, as is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Ibn ʿAbbās from Juwayriyyah bint al-Ḥārith that the Prophet ﷺ left her early when he went to pray the morning prayer and she was in her place of prayer. Then he returned after the first part of the morning and she was still seated. He said, "Have you remained continuously in the condition in which I left you?" She answered, "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "After [leaving] you, I said four phrases three times which if they were weighed against what you said this day, they would outweigh them:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ

‘Glorious is Allah and in His praise according to the number of His creations, the pleasure of His self, the weight of His throne, and the ink of His words.’”[58]

An-Nasā’ī narrated it and his wording is:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ

“Glorious is Allah, and praise belongs to Allah and there is no god but Allah and Allah is greater, according to the number of His creations, the pleasure of His self, the weight of His throne, and the ink of His words.”[59]

Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, and an-Nasā’ī narrated a hadith of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ that he went in along with the Prophet ﷺ to a woman in front of whom were date stones, or he said pebbles with which she was [counting her acts of] glorifying and he asked, “Shall I not inform you of that which is easier than this and better?

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا خَلَقَ فِي السَّمَاءِ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا خَلَقَ فِي الأَرْضِ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا هُوَ خَالِقٌ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ وَالحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، وَلاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ

Glorious is Allah according to the number of what He created in the heaven. Glorious is Allah according to the number of what He created in the earth. Glorious is Allah according to the number of what is between them. Glorious is Allah according to the number of what He is to create [in the future] and Allah is greater the like of that, and praise belongs to Allah the like of that, and there is no power and no strength but by Allah the like of that."[60]

At-Tirmidhī narrated a hadith of Ṣafiyyah that she said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered to visit me while in front of me there were four thousand date stones with which I was [counting as I] glorified Allah, and I said, 'I glorify with these,' and he asked, 'Shall I not teach you something more than that with which you glorify?' and I answered, 'Teach me.' He said, 'Say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ

"Glorious is Allah according to the number of His creations."'"

An-Nasā'ī, and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, narrated in a hadith of Abū Umāmah that the Prophet ﷺ passed

by him while he was moving his lips, and he asked, “What are you saying, Abū Umāmah?” He answered, “I am remembering my Lord.” He asked, “Shall I not inform you of more and better than your remembrance all night along with the day and all day along with the night? It is that you say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا خَلَقَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ مِلْءَ مَا خَلَقَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ مِلْءَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا أَحْصَى كِتَابُهُ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ مِلْءَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

‘Glorious is Allah according to the number of what He created. Glorious is Allah according to the volume of what He created. Glorious is Allah according to the number of what is on the earth and in the heaven. Glorious is Allah according to the volume of what is on the earth and in the heaven. Glorious is Allah according to the number of what His Book reckons. Glorious is Allah according to the volume of what His Book reckons. Glorious is Allah according to the number of every thing. Glorious is Allah according to the volume of every thing,’ and that you say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ

‘Praise belongs to Allah’ the like of that.’”[61]

Al-Bazzār narrated the like of it in a hadith of Abū’d-Dardā’.[62]

Ibn Abi’d-Dunyā narrated with his chain of transmission that the Prophet ﷺ said to Muʿādh, “Muʿādh, how many times do you remember your Lord every day? Do you remember Him ten thousand times every day?” He answered, “All of that I do.” He asked, “Shall I not show you some words which are easier for you than ten thousand and ten thousand, that you say:

لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَدَدَ مَا أَحْصَاهُ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَدَدَ عَدَدَ كَلِمَاتِهِ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ زِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مِلْءَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مِلْءَ أَرْضِهِ، لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ مَعَهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ مَعَهُ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ مَعَهُ.

‘There is no god but Allah according to the number of that which He reckons. There is no god but Allah according to the number of His words. There is no god but Allah according to the number of His creations. There is no god but Allah according to the weight of His throne. There is no god but Allah according to the volume of His heavens. There is no god but Allah according to the volume of His earth. There is no god

but Allah to the amount of the like of that along with it, and Allah is greater to the amount of the like of that along with it, and praise belongs to Allah to the amount of the like of that along with it.'"

There is with his chain of transmission that Ibn Masʿūd mentioned to him a woman who glorified Allah with [the use of] a string in which were tied knots, and he said, "Shall I not direct you to that which is better for you than it?

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ مِلْءَ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ مِلْءَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ

'Glorious is Allah according to the volume of land and sea. Glorious is Allah according to the volume of the heavens and the earth. Glorious is Allah according to the number of His creations, and according to the pleasure of His self,' because then you have filled the land and the sea, the heaven and the earth."

There is with his chain of transmission from al-Muʿtamir ibn Sulaymān at-Taymī that he said, "My father used to narrate five hadith and then he would say, 'Leisurely!

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَآ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ عَدَدَ مَا خَلَقَ وَعَدَدَ مَا هُوَ خَالِقٌ، وَزِنَةَ مَا خَلَقَ وَزِنَةَ مَا هُوَ خَالِقٌ، وَمِلْءَ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِلْءَ مَا هُوَ خَالِقٌ، وَمِلْءَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَمِلْءَ أَرْضِهِ ، وَمِثْلَ ذَلِكَ وَأَضْعَافَ ذَلِكَ، وَعَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ، وَمُنتَهَى رَحْمَتِهِ، وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ، وَمَبْلَغَ رِضَاهُ حَتَّى يَرْضَى وَإِذَا رَضِيَ، وَعَدَدَ مَا ذَكَرَهُ بِهِ خَلْقُهُ فِي جَمِيعِ مَا مَضَى، وَعَدَدَ مَا هُمْ ذَاكِرُوهُ فِيمَا بَقِيَ، فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ وَشَهْرٍ وَجُمُعَةٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ وَسَاعَةٍ مِنَ السَّاعَاتِ، وَتَنَفُّسٍ مِنْ أَبَدٍ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ أَبَدِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ أَمَدٌ مِنْ ذَلِكَ لاَ يَنْقَطِعُ أَوَّلُهُ وَلاَ يَنفَدُ آخِرُهُ.

Glorious is Allah and praise belongs to Allah and there is no god but Allah and Allah is greater and there is no power and no strength but by Allah according to the number of what He has created and the number of what He will create, and according to the weight of what He created and the weight of what He will create, and according to the volume of what He created and the volume of what He will create, and according to the volume of His heavens and the volume of His earth, and the like of that and multiples of that, and according to the number of His creations, the weight of His throne, the furthest limit of His mercy, the ink of His words, the furthest reach of His good pleasure until He is pleased and when He is

pleased, and according to the number of times His creation remembered Him in all that is now past, and according to the number of times they will remember Him in what remains, in every year, every month, every week, every day, every night, every single moment, and [according to the number of times His creation] inhaled and exhaled from endless time to forever, as long as there is the world and the next life, the utmost extreme of the time of that whose first is not cut off and whose last does not come to an end.'"

There is with his chain of transmission from al-Muʿtamir ibn Sulaymān that he said, "I saw ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Khālid [in a dream] after his death and I asked, 'What have you done?' He said, 'Good.' I asked, 'Do you hope for anything for the one who makes mistakes?' He answered, 'That he cling to the knowledge of the glorifications of Abū'l-Muʿtamir is the best thing.'"

Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā said, "Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn narrated to me, 'One of the people of Baṣra narrated to me that Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd saw in that which the dreamer sees a man who had been struck down in the land of the Byzantines, and he asked, "What is the best that you have seen there [in the next life] of actions?"

He answered, “I saw that the glorifications of Abū’l-Mu’tamir have a place with Allah.”””

Similarly, concise comprehensive supplications used to please the Prophet ﷺ. There is in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that ʿĀ’ishah said, “Concise comprehensive supplications used to please the Prophet ﷺ and he would give up anything other than that.”[63]

Al-Firyābī and others narrated a hadith of ʿĀ’ishah also that the Prophet ﷺ said to her, “‘ʿĀ’ishah, you should take to the concise comprehensive supplication:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ ، عَاجِلِهِ وآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ . اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا سَأَلَكَ مِنْهُ مُحَمَّدٌ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ ﷺ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِن شَرِّ مَا عَاذَ مِنْهُ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ . اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِن قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِن قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مَا قَضَيْتَ لِي مِن قَضَاءٍ أَن تَجْعَلَ عَاقِبَتَهُ رُشْداً .

‘O Allah, I ask You for all good now (or in this world) and in the future (or in the next world), that which I know and that which I do not know. I seek refuge with You from all evil now (or in this world) and in the future (or in the next world), that which I

know and that which I do not know. O Allah, I ask You of that good which Muḥammad, Your slave and Your prophet asked of You. I seek refuge with You from that evil from which Your slave and Your prophet sought refuge. O Allah, I ask You for the Garden and that which will draw me closer to it of word and deed. I seek refuge with You from the Fire and that which will draw me closer to it of word and deed. I ask You that whatever decrees You have decreed for me, that You make its outcome rightness of action.'" Imam Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and Ibn Ḥibbān, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and al-Ḥākim narrated it, but none of them have mention of concise comprehensive supplication. Al-Ḥākim has the word "complete" supplications. Abū Bakr al-Athram narrated it and according to him the Prophet ﷺ said to her, "What stops you from taking concise comprehensive words and their opening[64] words?" and then he mentioned this supplication.[65]

At-Tirmidhī narrated the hadith of Abū Umāmah in which he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ supplicated with many supplications of which we memorised nothing, so we said, ‘Messenger of Allah, you have supplicated with many supplications of which we memorised nothing.’ He said, ‘Shall I not direct you to that which includes all of that? You should say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا سَأَلَكَ مِنْهُ نَبِيُّكَ مُحَمَّدٌ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِن شَرِّ مَا اسْتَعَاذَ مِنْهُ نَبِيُّكَ مُحَمَّدٌ ، وَأَنتَ الْمُسْتَعَانُ ، وَعَلَيْكَ الْبَلاَغُ ، وَلاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ

“O Allah, we ask You for that good for which Your prophet Muḥammad asked You, and we seek refuge with You from that evil from which Your prophet Muḥammad sought refuge with You, and You are the One from Whom help is sought, and the fulfilment [of wishes and needs] is Your responsibility, and there is no power and no strength but by Allah.”””[66]

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others narrated a hadith of Umm Salamah that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in a long supplication of his:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ فَوَاتِحَ الْخَيْرِ وَخَوَاتِمَهُ وَجَوَامِعَهُ وَأَوَّلَهُ وَآخِرَهُ وَظَاهِرَهُ وَبَاطِنَهُ

“O Allah, I ask You the matters which open up good and those which conclude it, and the concise comprehensive [good things], and its first and last, its outward and inward.”[67]

There is in the *Musnad* that Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ heard one of his sons supplicating saying, “O Allah, I ask You for the Garden and its bliss and its silk brocade,” and the like of this, “and I seek refuge with You from the Fire and its chains and manacles.” So he said, “You have asked Allah for much good, and you have sought refuge with Him from much evil, but I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, ‘There will be people who will go beyond the limit in supplication,’ and he recited this *āyah*:

ادْعُواْ رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعاً وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

‘Call on your Lord humbly and secretly. He does not love those who overstep the limits.”[68] Indeed, it is sufficient for you to say:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَبَ إِلَيْهَا مِن قَوْلٍ وَعَمَلٍ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَبَ إِلَيْهَا مِن قَوْلٍ وَعَمَلٍ

‘O Allah, I ask You for the Garden and what draws one nearer to it of word and deed, and I seek refuge with You from the Fire and what draws one nearer to it of word and deed.’”

There is in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, “We used to say in the prayer behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ‘Peace be upon Allah, and peace be upon Jibrīl and Mikā’īl, and peace be upon so-and-so and so-and-so.’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to us one day, ‘Allah is Peace, so when any of you sit in the prayer, then say:

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ

“Greetings are for Allah and the prayers and the wholesome good things. Peace be upon you, O Prophet and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Peace be upon us and upon the right-acting slaves of Allah,” for when one says it it reaches every right-acting slave of Allah in the heaven and on earth:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

“I witness that there is no god but Allah and I witness that Muḥammad is His slave and His messenger,” and then let him choose whatever petitions he wishes.’”[69]

There is in the *Musnad* from Ibn Masʿūd that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught the matters that opened up good and gathered it, or the gatherers of good, the openers of it and its conclusions, and we didn’t know what we should say in our prayer until he taught us, and he said, ‘Say, “Greetings are for Allah…”’” and he mentioned the rest of it,[70] and Allah knows best.

The end of the book, and praise belongs to Allah alone, and may Allah bless our master Muḥammad and his family and companions and grant peace, and Allah is enough for us and the Best of Guardians.

1 Aḥmad in the *Musnad* (4:188), at-Tirmidhī (3435)

2 Ibn Ḥibbān (918)

3 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 41

4 Sūrat al-Jumuʿah: 10

5 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 35

6 Sūrat Āl ʿImrān: 191

7 Muslim (2676)

8 Aḥmad (2:323)

9 At-Tirmidhī (3596)

10 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (20:326)

11 Aḥmad (4:162), al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (427)

12 Ibn Abī Shaybah (10:302)

13 See Sūrat al-Kahf: 45

14 Aḥmad (3:75), an-Nasā'ī in *al-Kubrā* and Ibn Ḥibbān (840)

15 Aḥmad (3:68, 71) and Ibn Ḥibbān (817)

16 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (3:80-81)

17 Aḥmad (3:75) and at-Tirmidhī (3376)

18 Aḥmad (3:438)

19 Muslim (373)

20 Ibn Abī Shaybah (10:302)

21 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 102

22 Narrated by Ibn Abi'd-Dunyā as mentioned by al-Mundhirī in *at-Targhīb wa't-tarhīb* (2:395)

23 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* as mentioned in *Lisān al-mīzān* (5:195)

24 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (974)

25 Abū Nuʿaym in *al-Ḥilyah* (1:383)

26 He felt sorrowful because he could not do the same. Ed.

27 Sūrat al-Mā'idah: 54

28 Two idols worshipped by the idolaters. Ed.

29 Al-Bukhārī (5050) and Muslim (800)

30 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 2

31 Sūrat ar-Raʿd: 28

32 The saying “I sit with whoever remembers Me” has been mentioned by as-Sakhāwī in *al-Maqāṣid al-ḥasanah*.

33 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 45.

34 At-Tirmidhī (3580)

35 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 103

36 Sūrat an-Nisā’: 103

37 Sūrat al-Jumuʿah: 10

38 At-Tirmidhī (3428-9), Ibn Mājah (2235), Aḥmad (1:47), ad-Dārimī (2:293) and al-Ḥākim (1:538)

39 Ibn ʿAdī in *al-Kāmil* (5:1745)

40 Sūrat al-Aḥzāb: 42

41 Sūrat al-Insān: 25

42 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 41

43 Sūrah Maryam: 11

44 Sūrat ar-Rūm: 17

45 Sūrat al-Ghāfir: 55

46 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 205

47 Sūrah Ṭā Hā: 130

48 Sūrah Qāf: 39

49 Sūrat as-Sajdah: 16

50 Al-Bukhārī (3113), Muslim (2727) and others

51 Al-Bukhārī (1154)

52 At-Tirmidhī (3526)

53 Abū Dāwūd (5042)

54 An-Nasā’ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa’l-laylah* (807-9)

55 Not found in the published version of *Musnad Aḥmad*

56 Al-Bukhārī (6312) and Muslim (2711)

57 Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 135

58 Muslim (2726)

59 An-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (161)

60 Abū Dāwūd (1500), at-Tirmidhī (3568), and an-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah*

61 An-Nasā'ī in *ʿAmal al-yawm wa'l-laylah* (166) and Ibn Hibban (830)

62 Al-Bazzār (3080)

63 Abū Dāwūd (1482)

64 Opening words are words that are clear and unlock deep meanings and interpretations as opposed to words that are shallow and complicated. Ed.

65 Aḥmad (6: 134, 146-7), al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-mufrad* (639), Ibn Mājah (3846), Ibn Ḥibbān (869) and al-Ḥākim (1: 521-522)

66 At-Tirmidhī (3521)

67 Aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* (23:717) and al-Ḥākim (1:520)

68 Sūrat al-Aʿrāf: 55

69 Al-Bukhārī (835) and Muslim (402)

70 Aḥmad(1:408)

Index

abasement, as cause of answered supplication, 165
ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, 458, 593
ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿUmar, 559
ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, 512
ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, 90, 442-43
ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad az-Zāhidī, 323
ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn Zayd, 330
Abdāl, 761
ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir (amir of Basra), 161
ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ
  avoided living in the Ḥaram, 607
  on honouring guests, 229
  on remembering wrong actions, 302
ʿAbdullāh ibn Jahsh, 632
ʿAbdullāh ibn Maʿqil, 528
ʿAbdullāh ibn Sahl, 541
ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUtbah, 546
abortion, 70-71
abstinence. *See zuhd*

Abū'l-ʿĀliyah, 347
Abū'l-ʿAtāhiyah, 660-61
Abū Bakr ibn as-Samʿānī, 37
Abū Bakr ash-Shāmī, 545
Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq
  hypocrisy, fear of, 750-51
  on inheritance due to a grandmother, 701
  on inheritance of someone without direct heirs, 703
  on *istiqāmah*, 346, 349
  jihād against the self, advice on, 333
  love of Allah of, 126
  milking of goats, 588
  no right to kill, 214
  oath not to ask anything of people, 325
  on silence during Hajj, prohibition of, 221
  sunnah of, obligation to follow, 454
  taqwā, counsel of, 264
  on the tongue, 219, 473
  zakāh, fighting those who withheld, 133, 373, 460
Abū'd-Dardā'
  on contentment with the Decree, 330
  on disobeying Allah in secret, 268
  on doing without the world, 518

on hospitality, 229
hypocrisy, fear of, 748
on intention without action, reward for, 608
on prayer at night, 372
on the superiority of remembrance of Allah, 414
supplication, advice on, 322
on *taqwā*, 113
on those who remember Allah much, 768
on tranquillity and doubt, 434
on transience of life, 661
Abū Dāwūd, 2, 443
Abū Dharr
on helping someone as *ṣadaqah*, 426
oath not to ask anything of people, 325
on supplications, 169
on *taqwā*, 266
on transient nature of the world, 654
travelling provision, share of the world as, 509
Abū Ḥanīfah, Imam
on bequests, 99
on bidding up a price, 565
on corroborative evidence, requirement of claimant to produce, 541
on how the death penalty is carried out, 250

on ʿ*iddah*, prolonging deliberately, 526
on intention, 21
on fat from *maytah*, using, 720
on murder through coercion, 648
on oaths from trustworthy people, 549
prostitution, position on being coerced into, 649
punishment for renegades, 205
on sale of dogs, 722
on transactions under duress, 651
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712
water, laws relating to use of, 532
Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī, 442-43
Abū Ḥāzim, 423-24, 500
Abū Hurayrah
on hospitality, 229
on lying to children, prohibition of, 743
remembrance of Allah of, 770
on sale of dogs, 721
on seeking forgiveness, 687
on *taqwā*, 263
Abū ʿImrān al-Jūnī, 608, 736
Abū Isḥāq ibn Shāqilā, 558
Abū Jaʿfar al-Muḥawwalī, 769-70
Abū'l-Jawzā', 756

Abū’l-Jild, 422
Abū Lubābah, 530-31
Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī, 376, 584, 633
Abū Nuwās, 679
Abū Quʿays, 712
Abū’l-Minhāl, 687
Abū Ṣafwān ar-Raʿīnī, 510-11
Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, 396
Abū Saʿīd at-Tamīmī, 736
Abū Shurayḥ al-Iskandarānī, 147
Abū Sulaymān. See ad-Dārānī
Abū Thaʿlabah al-Khushanī, 638
Abū Thawr, 646
Abū ʿUbayd, 2, 344, 532, 543, 646
Abū ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, 509
Abū Umāmah, 596-97
Abū Wā’il, 588
Abū Yaʿlā al-Mawṣilī, Qāḍī, 440, 528, 543, 558
Abū Yaʿqūb an-Nahrajūrī, 116
Abū Yūsuf, 99
Abū Zurʿah, 443
actions
  acceptance of, 159
  attainment of one’s degree through, 597-98

behaving in secret as one behaves in public, 343
blessings take their due of on Day of Rising, 420
as cause of entering the Garden, 465
concealing one's good, 268
as created by Allah, 384
depending on, avoiding, 297
discharging obligations as best form of, 622
feeling secure in, avoiding, 291-92
for the sake of being seen as *shirk*, 610
good eradicates wrong, 269
hadith of, 463-65, 601-2
illness, performing before being overcome by, 661
love of Allah as preventing weariness in, 626-27
multiplied reward for, 184-85, 292, 603
no recording of after sign of the Hour, 662-63
optional (See optional acts of obedience)
predestination of, 81-83
purposes of, 516
reckoning of, 399
recording of, 217-18, 280
reward for good is another good action after it, 590
seeing in the next life, 187
as shade or exposure on the Day of Rising, 584
transformation of wrong into good, 186-88

types of, 88
weighing of good and wrong, 291, 297
words as included among, 182
wrong (See wrong actions)
adab, hadith of, 180
Ādam, 563
Ādam ibn Abī Iyās, 323
admonition, circles of, 447
adultery
stoning for, 136, 199-202, 210
coercion into, 544, 649
effect on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712-13
īmān removed from adulterer, 192
temporary marriage as, 558
with neighbour's wife, seriousness of, 222
advice. *See* counsel
afflictions
as atonement for wrong, 285, 295
contentment with, 329-31
lessening, by doing without *dunyā*, 501-2
preferring to supplication for deliverance from, 635
protection from, 638
afternoon prayer (ʿAṣr), 516, 777-78

agriculture, 532
Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Imam
on bidding up a price, 565
on breaking oaths under duress, 651
certainty in provision from Allah, 500
on eating little, 734
on excessive questioning, 148
exorbitant price, option to cancel sale because of, 528
expertise in hadith, 442-43
on forgetfulness in various acts of worship, 645-46
on the foundations of Islam, 2
on funeral prayers for miscarried foetus, 75
on gentleness when forbidding a wrong, 560
on good character, 306
ḥarām, careful use of term, 483
on hospitality, 230
on how the death penalty is carried out, 249-50
on inadvertent harm, legal consequences of, 529
on inheritance of the remainder, 691
intentions, position on, 3, 21
on *jihād*, obligation of, 478-79
on murder through coercion, 648
on obeying parents on doubtful matters, 112

on opposing tyrannical rulers, 555
on a person who refuses to fast, 135-36
on a person who refuses to pay *zakāh*, 135
on prayer in *ḥarām* clothing, 159
on prohibition and command, 150
prostitution, position on being coerced into, 649
on sale of dogs, 721
on sale on top of another's sale, 571-72
scrupulousness of, 175
on selling a songstress, 719
on selling inheritance when division is difficult, 531
on separating a slave mother and child, 94
on taking heretics before the ruler, 587
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 107
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712
on using fat from *maytah*, 720
on vowing to walk to Hajj, 534
water, laws relating to use of, 532
on wishful thinking, 503
ʿĀ'ishah aṣ-Ṣiddīqah
discourses, advice to those who give,
on fur from unslaughtered animals, using, 491

on oaths while joking or angry, 243
on person in *ihram* eating game, 174
on restraining oneself from the *haram*, 150
on seeking forgiveness, 687
travelling provision, share of the world as, 509
al-ʿAlā' ibn al-Ḥaḍramī, 632-33
ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib
on abandoning the prayer, 62
on addictiveness of chess, 727
claimants, practice of requiring, 546
capacity for extreme temperatures, 756
on Companions, remembrance of Allah of, 772
on contraception by withdrawal, 70
on *dunyā*, avoiding censuring without qualification, 511-12
on fasting, 467-68
on fearing one's wrong actions, 400
first call to prayer on *Jumuʿah*, innovation of, 459
following rulings of ʿUmar, 456
on *jihād*, 552
on *jihād* against the self, 333
Khaybar, battle of, 132
on lovers of Allah, 774
on protective angels, 314

on punishing with fire, 252
punishment of renegades, 250
as right-acting *khalīfah*, 454
on *shayṭān* of ʿUmar as too much in awe of him, 630
on steadfastness, 375
on stoning the adulterer, 202
supplications of as answered, 632
on taking stipends from a ruler, 107
taqwā, counsel of, 264-65
on transient nature of the world, 654
ʿAlī ibn al-Madīnī. 443
ʿAlī ibn al-Muwaffaq, 500
Allah
awe of, 50
blessings of, immensity of, 419-21
calling when supplicating, 166-68
concern only for, 630-31
contentment with, 43
disobedience does not harm, 391-92
drawing near to, 621-22
endless treasures of, 397-98
essence of, blameworthiness of talking about, 462
evil not ascribed to, 395

forgiveness of, 271
holding a good opinion of, 678
injustice, impossibility of for, 383-84
light of, 51
limits of, 112-13, 288, 311, 483-86
love of, 54, 115-16
loves being asked, 326, 388
loving for the sake of, 47, 671-72
mindfulness of (*See* mindfulness of Allah)
modesty before, 181
nearness of, 51-52
noble generosity of, 394-97
partners, associating with, 359, 385
purity, 156
rejoicing at repentance of a slave, 392-93
reliance on (*See* reliance on Allah)
as remembering those who remember Him, 596
remembrance of, 41, 218-19
ṣadaqah of, 407
seeing in the next world, 516-17
selling oneself to, 377
silence of on certain matters as mercy, 475-76, 492-93
sincerity towards, obligation of, 122-23

submitting to, 439
waging war on, 619-21
'withness' of, 318-19
worshiping as though you see, 49
al-Aʿmash, 68, 441, 693-93
ambiguities
avoiding, 109-10, 113-14
examples of, 102
investigating into while committing clear wrong actions, 174-75
as leading to the *ḥarām*, 111
obeying parents in, 112
reasons for the existence of, 104-5
ruling according to initial assumption, 105-6
those who know them, 109
uncertainty about which judgement applies, 108-9
using items belonging to non-Muslims, 106-7
See also doubt
ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbd Qays, 403
ʿAmmār, 454, 500
ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, 185, 518, 636
ʿAmr ibn Qays, 735
ʿAmr ibn ʿUbayd, 34, 478
analogical reasoning, 487

Anas ibn Mālik, 110, 239, 592, 633
Anas ibn an-Naḍr, 631
al-ʿAnasī, ʿAmr ibn al-Aswad, 735
al-ʿAnbarī, ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥasan, 94
al-Andalusī, Abū'l-Ḥasan Ṭāhir, 3
angels
  of death, 638
  descent over reciters of Qur'ān and circles of *dhikr*, 594-96
  protective, 314
  recording of deeds, 217-18, 280
  supplications of, 294
  writing of fate for each individual, 76-79
anger
  controlling, 270, 306
  cursing, 241
  divorcing and swearing oaths in, 242-44
  hadith warning against, 233-34
  Qur'ānic verses on, 235
  remedies for, 235-37
  suppressing, reward for, 237-38
animals
  bestiality, 207
  cursing, 241

dogs, sale of, 721
fear of death, 254
milking, 588
protection from, through being mindful of Allah, 316
responsibility for crops ruined by, 114
sale of, 721-23
showing mercy to, 254-55
skin and fat from *maytah*, using, 720-21
slaughtering, 90, 248, 253, 645
treating well, as *ṣadaqah*, 429
unslaughtered, wearing fur and leather of, 491
al-ʿAnṭākī, Aḥmad ibn ʿĀṣim, 320
anthropomorphism, 52
appetite (shahwah), 238
argumentation, avoiding, 145-48
arrogance, 193-94, 356
al-Ashajj al-ʿAṣrī, 341
Ashhab, 544
al-ashir, 563
ʿAṣr prayer, 516, 777-78
assault, 208-9
ʿAṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ
on assemblies of dhikr, 280

on fits of anger, destructiveness of, 242
on giving away *haram* wealth in *ṣadaqah*, 163
on *ʿiddah*, extending by taking returning wife, 526
on *iʿtikāf*, invalidation of, 91
on oaths to divorce, 646
on sale of dogs, 722
on using fat from *maytah*, 720
on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
ʿAṭā' as-Salīmī, 656
al-ʿAṭāridī, Abū Rajā', 748
ʿAṭiyyah al-ʿAwfi, 302
atonement
of the Children of Isrā'īl, 274-75
by *ḥadd* punishment, 285-88
by martyrdom, 296
through serving one's mother, 288-89
augury, 757
awe of Allah, 50
awliyā'
enmity to, prohibition of, 620
as means of attaining to the love of Allah, 629
loving, for the sake of Allah, 628-29
See also wilāyah
ʿAwn ibn ʿAbdullāh, 518, 660

Aws ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, 242-43
al-Awzāʿī
  on asking forgiveness, 685
  on breaking promises, 742
  on commanding what is right, 557
  instinct for recognising hadith, 442
  on intention, 21
  on oaths to divorce, 646
  Qur'ān study groups, acceptance of, 593
  on sale of dogs, 721
  on transience of life, 659
  on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
  on water, refusing, 532
Ayyūb, 334
Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī, 442, 519
Azerbaijan, 491

backbiting, 467, 577-78, 586
backgammon, 727
Badr, 209, 673
Bakr al-Muzanī, 419, 504, 660, 664, 688
banditry, 356
Banī al-ʿAnbar, 133
al-Barā' ibn Mālik, 632

al-baṭar, 563
al-Baṭṭāl, 332
begging, 227
Believers. *See mu'minūn*; Muslims
bequests, 97-99, 525. *See also* inheritance.
bestiality, 207
bidding up the price to fool another buyer, 565
Bilāl, 771
Bilāl ibn Saʿd, 748
birds, eating, 489, *See also* food
birr, 431, 434-36
Bishr al-Ḥāfī, 108
Bishr ibn al-Ḥārith, 112, 175, 760-62
Bishr ibn as-Sirrī, 116
al-Bisṭāmī, Abū Yazīd, 772
blessings of Allah
  gratitude for, 421-24
  immensity of, 419-21
bones, 417-18
Book of the Decree, 79-80
breastfeeding
  hadith of, 709
  preventing mother from, 527
  unmarriageability because of, 711-14

brotherhood
actions entailed by, 573-73
between believers, 46
hadith of, 561-62
love between Muslims, Qur'ānic verses on, 567-68
mu'minūn as a single body, 578
preventing harm, 573
reconciling between people, 567-68
sectarian arguments, 568-69
severing relations, prohibition of, 569-70
buildings, 59-60, 411
al-Bukhārī, 443
Bunān al-Ḥammāl, 319
burglary, 209
Bushayr ibn Kaʿb, 342
butter, 476, 490
Byzantium, 657

call to prayer, 133, 459
camels, due of, 427
cannabis, 730
cats, selling, 722-23
cauterisation, 757
certainty, 329, 500-501

character, good
defined, 306
devotion to Allah, difficulty of combining with, 304
as heavy in the scales, 369
merit of, 305-6
restraining one's anger as, 234-35
cheese, 476, 490
chess
addictiveness of, 727
objecting to, 559
chief supplication for forgiveness, 685
children
cursing one's, prohibition of, 241
giving gifts to, 94
inheritance of, 695-98
lying to, prohibition of, 743
phases of life in the womb, 69-73
prohibition of killing, 248
safeguarded because of right-acting father, 315
shunning, as form of discipline, 570
suckling, 527, 709, 711-14
treating mother kindly, 282-83
Children of Isrā'īl, 274-75
circles of *dhikr*, 592-96

civil disturbance, 206, 236, 556
claimants
  cannot swear oath, 541, 543
  definitions of, 540
  hadith of, 537
clothes
  doubts about purity of, 106
  fur garments, 475, 490
  of leather from unslaughtered animal, wearing, 491
coercion
  by threats of violence, 648
  when one is powerless, 647-48
commanding the right and forbidding wrong
  conditions for, 555-56, 558-59
  gentleness in, 560
  hadith of, 551-52
  intention for, 559
  on matters about which there are differences of opinion, 558-59
  obligation or otherwise of, 478
  when one knows the person will not listen, 556
commands
  asking excessive questions about, 140-51, 488
  dropped if harm is caused by, 533

hadith of, 139
Companions
fear of hypocrisy, 748-49
hunger of, 738
precedence among opinions of, 455-56
prohibited from asking questions, 142
remembrance of Allah of, 772
right-acting *khalīfahs*, 453-58
travelling provision, share of the world as, 509
warning against hurting, 621
concern, leaving what is not one's, 179-80. (*See also* speech; conversation)
concessions, when to take, 174
confinement of animals, 253
consensus, 104
conspiracy, prohibition of, 565-66
contentment, 43-44, 329-31, 763
contraception, 70
contracts
deceit in, 93
innovations in, 91
intending something *ḥarām*, 25-26
prohibited forms of, 92
selling doubtful items, 112

with someone who has lawful and unlawful wealth, 107
transacting on behalf of a third party, 92-93
with terminally sick person, 93
treachery in, 744-45
See also transactions; sales
conversation
excluding another from, unlawfulness of, 577
leaving what does not concern one, 181-84
restraining the tongue, 219-20
speaking little, superiority of, 181-82
speaking well or remaining silent, 215-18
tongue, controlling, 472-73
See also speech; tongue
converting to Islam, 185-86
corpses, prohibition of selling, 724
corroborative testimony, 538-44
counsel
giving, as sincerity, 126
hadith of, 119
as the right of a Muslim, 120
See also sincerity
courtesy (*adab*), hadith of, 180
crying. *See* weeping

cursing, 241

aḍ-Ḍaḥāk ibn Qays, 321, 358, 478, 683
Dajjāl, 58, 662
ad-Dārānī, Abū Sulaymān
  on being at ease with Allah only, 54
  definition of *zuhd*, 514
  on eating little, 735, 737
  on ʿUthman and ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, 512
  on *taqwā* in public, only having, 269
  on *Zuhd*, 499, 505
  on the *zuhd* of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 513
Dāwūd, 304-5, 422, 510, 644
Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭā'ī
  on intentions, 10
  on longing for Allah, 631
  taqwā of, 117
  on transient nature of the world, 657
  on wishful thinking, 659
Day of Rising
  actions after signs of, as of no benefit, 662
  appearance of the Qur'ān on, 369, 376
  erasure of wrong as taking place after, 302-3
  made easier for seeker of knowledge, 590

mu'minūn on, 324
neighbours, dispute of on, 225-26
people who loved each other for the sake of Allah, rank of on, 628
recompense in similar form to action, 582
rising of people according to their intentions, 9
shade of Allah, 51
sweating of people on, 584
wrong actions cancel out good, 291, 297
wrong acts one resolved to do, seeing on, 613
wrongdoing as darkness on, 385
death
being prepared for, 322-24
descriptions of, 636
hesitation of Allah over taking soul of *mu'min*, 617-19, 636-39
in prostration, 638-39
regrets at moment of, 403, 664
remembering, as *zuhd*, 503-4
saying the *shahādahs* before, 361
supplication for the dead, 37
supplications near moment of, 637
death penalty
executing without torment, 248

manner in which carried out, 249-51
for murder, 202-4
for renegades, 204-7
for sodomy, 207
stoning for adultery, 199-202, 210
debate, avoiding, 145-48
debt. *See* loans
deception
in financial transactions, 93
prohibition of, 565-66
Decree
believing in, 33-34
Book, the, 79-80
contentment with, 329-31
denying, innovation of, 462
the fortunate and unfortunate, 81-83
hadith on, 28-29, 67-68
patience with, 328-29
Pen, the, 79
Qur'ānic verses on, 327-28
writing of fate in the womb, 76-79
deeds. *See* actions
deliverance from distress, 334-35
dependants, obligation of providing for, 761

desires, 238, 359
despair, 333-34
destiny. *See* Decree
deviance, definition of, 457-58
dhikr. *See* remembrance of Allah
Dhū'n-Nūn al-Miṣrī
  on Allah's love of forgiving, 393
  lines of poetry on love of Allah, 623-24
  on love of Allah, 116
  on remembrance of Allah, 773, 769
  on the signs of love of Allah, 54
dietary laws. *See* food
dīn. *See* Islam
discourses, 460
discretionary punishments, 285, 486
disobedience
  to corrupt rulers, 454
  corruption of *tawḥīd* because of, 347
  as destroying oneself, 377
  does not harm Allah, 391-92
  fasting as shield against, 467-68
  forgiveness of, 392-94
  giving up, as a form of gratitude, 424-25
  intention for without action, 609-10

and *kufr*, 63
as preferring the self over Allah and His Messenger, 671
reason for, 317
steadfastness in avoiding, 375
as worshipping *shayṭān*, 359
See also wrong actions
disputes
corroborative evidence, requirement of claimant to produce, 539
going beyond the limits in, 744
Jewish and Christian witnesses, oaths from, 547-48
oath not returned to claimant, 543
oaths as right of defendant, 545
qasāmah, 541-42
settling, with confidential discussions, 8
witnesses, 542-43, 546-48
distress
deliverance from, 334-35
easing by concealing other's faults, 586-87
easing, hadith of, 581-82
overlooking debts, 585
divorce

being forced to after abstaining from sexual intercourse, 651-52
doubts about, 105
in a fit of anger, 242-43
forbidden types of, 94-97
harming by prolonging, prohibition of, 525-26
intention in, 23-24
khulʿ, 651
liʿān, 141, 543
oath to, breaking forgetfully, 646
overstepping the limits in, 483-84
pronouncing while drunk, 731
uncertainty about type of, 108-9
under duress, 649
vowing to refuse sexual intercourse (*īlā*), 526-27
ẓihār, 242-43, 714-15
dogs, 721
donkeys, buying and selling, 721-22
doubt
about ownership of food, 105-6
hadith of, 171-72
heart not at rest with, 439-40
See also ambiguity
drunkenness, 207-8, 211

duʿā. See supplication
Duha prayer, 777
dunyā
afflictions, lessening by doing without, 501-2
being in as stranger, 653-54
censure of, meaning of, 505-7, 511-12
fear of, 513-14
as fleeting, 511
gain in as decrease of one's rank with Allah, 507-8
love of, censure of, 517
next world as superior to, 515-17
prayer considered as part of, 514
Qur'ānic verses on, 506
real purpose of, 508
reason for accursedness of, 515
transience of, 654-60
worthlessness of, 498
Durayd ibn as-Summah, 248

eagles, selling, 723
eloquence, 447
embryo, 69-73
emigration, 11-12, 36
envy

avoiding, 195-96
being overcome by, but not acting upon, 564
categories of, 562
as illness of nations, 563-64
as opposite of *īmān*, 193
permissible forms of, 564
Qur'ānic verses on, 563
equanimity, 341
espionage, penalty for, 209
Ethiopia, 11
evil, existence of, 395
excellence. *See iḥsān*.

Fajā'ah, 250
Fajr. *See* morning prayer
falcons, selling, 723
family
dependants, obligation of providing for, 761
erasing wrong actions through serving parents, 288-89
father murdering child, retaliation for, 203
giving gifts to children, 94
kinship through breastfeeding, 709
mothers, 282-23, 288-89, 434

safeguarding children, 315
spending on, as *ṣadaqah*, 410-11
farā'iḍ. *See* inheritance
farḍ obligations, 477-78. *See also* obligations
farewell address of the Prophet, 450-51, 576-77
Farqad as-Sabakhī, 126, 626
fasting
as best type of steadfastness, 375
as defence in the grave, 369
eating forgetfully while, 646
foul speech, avoiding while, 467
intention for during Ramaḍān, 21
invalidation of, 90
on a journey or while ill, 94
multiplication of reward for, 603-4
Ramaḍān, forgiveness in, 278
refusing to observe, 135-56
as shield, 466-67
showing off in, 17
of silence, prohibition of, 221
superiority of serving people to, 589
travellers, dispensation for, 533
uninterrupted, 755-56
Fatḥ al-Mawṣilī, 626, 769

Fātiḥah, 366
faults
  prohibition of seeking out, 578, 586
  veiling, 126-27
fear
  of Allah, 41, 148-49, 266, 554
  compared with love, 121
  controlling one's, 238
  of one's wrong actions, 400
  See also taqwā
fever, 733
fighting
  avoiding if the call to prayer is heard, 133
  command to engage in, 130
  hadith of, 129-30
  innovators, 212-13
  mutilation, prohibition of, 248-49
  Qur'ānic verses on, 132-33
  those who give up prayer, 134-35
  See also jihād
fiqh
  debating about, avoiding, 145-48
  intention of seeking knowledge, 20, 148
  investigation, excessive, 492-94

questioning, avoiding, 140-43, 488
reason for learning, 144-45
ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, precedence of judgements of, 455-57
See also Sharīʿah; knowledge; scholars
Firʿawn, 321-22
fire
punishing with, 252-53
refusing use of, 533
Fire, the
asking refuge from continually, 678
avoiding, by adhering to the obligations alone, 353-55
blame of people of, 402-3
decree of those who will enter, 81-83
extinguished by *īmān*, 360
fasting as shield against, 466-67
people of as arrogant and proud, 575-76
shahādah as cause for avoiding, 356-57
fitnah. *See* civil disturbance
fiṭrah. *See* natural disposition
foetuses, 69-73
food
birds, eating, 489

eating game while in *ihram*, 174
eating little, 734-39
while fasting, 646
feeding a *mu'min* in hunger, 582-83
full belly, 733-37
ḥalāl and *ḥarām*, 102
ḥarām, effect of, 157
hoarding, 173
intoxicating, prohibition of, 730
meat, 105, 490-91
oaths on lawfulness of, 548
prohibited types, 481
sharing, 224-27, 510, 737
wholesome, 155
Zoroastrians, cheese of, 490
fools, 57-58
forgetfulness, 645-47
forgiveness
after an act of disobedience, 271
chief supplication for, 685
compared with erasure, 294-95
hadith of, 675-76
hoping in, 679-80
love of Allah of, 392-93

of minor lapses, 300
Muslims, forgiving, 582
seeking, 680-84
supplications for, 390-91
tawḥīd as cause for, 688-90
through serving one's mother, 288-89
verse guaranteeing, 284
fortunate, the, 81-83
Friday sermons. *See khuṭbahs*; *Jumuʿah* prayer
frightening Muslims, prohibition of, 577
al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ
on abandoning means completely, 760
on anger, 242
on despairing of people, 336
on doing without, 500
on exalting oneself, prohibition of, 194
on intentions, 10-11
on intimacy with Allah, 54
on love compared with fear, 121
on love of Allah, 629
on loving to be peerless among people, 196
on the *mu'min* in the world, 655
on the noble generosity of Allah, 394-95
on opposing tyrannical rulers, 555

on possessing *ḥarām* property, 164
rejection of the world, 513
on restraining the tongue, 220
on scrupulousness, 172
Shaʿwānah the worshipper, meeting with, 321
on seeking the world, 507
on showing off and *shirk*, 610
on those who have attained, 126
on transacting with someone who has *haram* wealth, 108
on transience of life, 658
on veiling other's faults, 126-27
on weeping, 302
full belly
as hardening the heart, 734-37
hadith of, 733
funeral prayer
attending without an intention, 428-29
for a miscarried foetus, 75
fur garments, 476, 490

gambling
taking payment from wealth gained by, 107-8
prohibition of, 482, 726

game
eating while in *iḥrām*, 174
hunting while in *iḥrām*, 647
Garden, the
actions as cause of entering, 465
asking for continually, 678
debts, prohibition of entering until discharged, 356
decree of those who will enter, 81-83
endlessness of bounties of, 397-98
entering, by adhering to the obligations alone, 353-55
mu'minūn, as yearning to return to, 655
path to, eased by seeking knowledge, 589-91
people of, as considered weak in this world, 575-76
people of, as praising Allah, 402
prayer and *wuḍū'* as cause for opening gates of, 367-68
seeing one's Lord in, 516-17
shahādah as cause for entering, 356-57
"There is no power and no strength but by Allah" as treasure of, 326
two actions to enter one into, 615
wrong actions that debar one from, 356
gaze, lowering, 267-68, 298

generosity, 306
genitals, safeguarding from the prohibited, 312-13
al-Ghāmidiyyah, 200, 587
Ghazwān, 54
ghibṭah (envious emulation), 564
Ghunaym ibn Qays, 661
ghusl, merit of performing, 367-68
gifts, 94, 572
gnosis. *See maʿrifah*
good character. *See* character
gossip, 141
governance
  excellence in, 248
  expropriation of property, 550
  Ibn ʿAbbās's advice to a ruler, 127
  justice, 622-23
  khulafā', right acting, 453-58
  love of leadership, 502
  misuse of the public treasury, 161-62
  obeying rulers, 451-54
  preventing harm, 530-31
  rising up against rulers, prohibition of, 134-35
  sincerity towards rulers, 120, 124-25
  taking charge of people's affairs, 192-93

when it is permissible to disobey rulers, 454
wrong, preventing ruler from doing, 554-55
gratitude, 421-25
grave, rising from, 324. *See also* Day of Rising
grazing animals, 114
greetings, 31-32, 426, 572
guests
honouring, 215, 228-31
merit of sharing food with, 510
guidance
as only from Allah, 386-87
natural disposition to, 388-89
supplications for, 466

Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad, 54
Ḥabīb al-ʿAjami Abū Muḥammad, 634, 660
Ḥabīb ibn al-Ḥārith, 271
Ḥabīb ibn Muḥammad, 378
ḥadd punishment
applying to someone under the influence of an intoxicant, 731-32
as atonement, 285-88
death penalty, 202-7
defined, 486

See also punishment; death penalty.
hadith
critical discrimination of, 440-43
expertise of scholars of, 441-43
explaining mistakes in transmission of as sincerity, 125
scholars of, 147
writing of, ʿUmar's prohibition of, 461
Hajar, 758
Hajj
abandoning, 136
eating game while in, 174
employee, performing as an, 18-19
farewell of the Prophet, 450, 452, 576-77
fighting those who give up, 135
forgiveness for performing, 278
ḥaram wealth, performing with 158
invalidation of, 90
leaving unperformed, 64
missing ʿArafāt, 153-54
as performed with good treatment (*mabrūr*), 435
performing on behalf of others, 21
provisions, performing without, 760
sexual intercourse in *iḥrām*, penalty for, 456

vowing to walking to, 533-34
al-Ḥajjāj ibn Dīnār, 173
Ḥajjāj ibn Farāfiṣah, 756
al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf, 321, 593
ḥalāl
ambiguous matters (*See* ambiguities)
asking excessive questions about, 140-41
careful use of term, importance of, 479-80
clarity of, 101-3
considering something as, meaning of, 351-52
declaring *ḥarām*, prohibition of, 352-53
doing without, as *zuhd*, 504
explained in the Qur'ān, 102-3
initial assumption of, 105, 488-89
innovations regarding, 462
seeking, to spend in charity, compared with *zuhd* of, 513
halves, 365-66
al-Hamdāniyyah, 202
hands
raising during supplication, 165-66
shaking, 572
Ḥanẓalah, 750-51
ḥarām

ambiguities as leading to, 111 (*See also* ambiguities)
asking excessive questions about, 140-41
avoiding, as sincerity, 122
careful use of term, importance of, 479-80
as cause of rejected supplications, 168-70
clarity of, 101-3
considering something as, meaning of, 351-52
doing without, as *zuhd*, 504
excellence in abandoning, 247
explained in the Qur'ān, 102-3
initial assumption of, 105-6
innovations regarding, 462
permissibility, assumption of, 488-89
permitted things, avoiding for fear of falling into, 262
proving that something is, 487-88
Qur'ānic verses on, 480-82
restraining oneself from, importance of, 150-51
selling, prohibition of, 717
strong desires for, 152
wealth, spending as *ṣadaqah*, 160-61, 163-64
See also wrong actions
Ḥarb al-Kirmānī, 593

al-Ḥārith ibn Kaladah, 734
al-Ḥārithī, Muḥammad ibn an-Naḍr, 627, 737, 774
harm
in bequests, prohibition of, 525
dispensations for commands that cause, 533
in divorce, prohibition of, 525-26
exorbitant prices as, 528
hadith prohibiting, 521-24
inadvertent, legal consequences of, 529
preventing, 530-31, 573
separating mother and child, prohibition of, 528-29
withholding, as *ṣadaqah*, 408, 427-28
al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī
on acts of kindness without intention, 428
on bad opinions, having, of a Muslim, 612
on blessings, avoiding using them for disobedience, 425
on breastfeeding, unmarriageability because of, 714
on causing confusion, 146
on certainty in Allah's providing for one, 500
as chief person of Basra because of his *zuhd*, 519
on coercion, 649

on commanding the right and forbidding wrong, 478
on contentment and steadfastness, 331
description of *shayṭān*, 347
on discourses as good innovation, 460
on disobedience, reason for, 317
on eating little, 734, 736
on envy which is not acted upon, 564
on good character, 306
on gratitude, 422
on the heart, 115
on helping a Muslim, superiority of to other forms of worship, 588
on hypocrisy, 742, 749
on judges, mistakes of, 644
on knowledge on the tongue and in the heart, 591
on love of the world, 510, 518
on man as a collection of days, 657, 658-59
on the *mu'min* and *kāfir*, 511
obedience of, 117
on obedience and love, 116
on obedience to rulers, 451-52
on promises, 743
prostitution, position on being coerced into, 649

on reflection, 430
on reliance on Allah, 754
on remembrance of Allah, 280, 768-69
on repentance, 272
on responsibility for only oneself, verse of, 557
on seeing the enormity of one's wrong actions, 290
on seeking forgiveness, 681
on seeking help from other than Allah, 327
on self control, 238
on the *shahādah*, conditions of, 357-58
on shaking hands, 572
simile of the Prophet with his *ummah*, 656
on sincerity, 126
on spending *ḥarām* wealth as *ṣadaqah*, 160
on striving to set oneself free, 378
supplications of as answered, 633
on *taqwā*, 113, 261-62
on the tongue, 473
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 107-8
on transformation of wrong into good actions, 188
on transience of life, 661
on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
on waging war with Allah, 621

on wishes of three people of knowledge, 659
on *zuhd*, 502, 513
Ḥassān ibn Abī Sinān, 172
Ḥātim al-Aṣamm, 83
hatred
as illness, 563
for the sake of Allah, 568
towards other Muslims, prohibition of, 566
hawā' (love or desire), 672
hawks, selling, 723
Ḥaywah ibn Shurayḥ, 636
health
abstinence as key to, 734
benefiting from, 661
as body's wealth, 419-20
See also medicine
heart, the
anger as a burning coal in, 236
delights in remembrance of Allah, 773
disliking wrong actions, obligation of, 552-53, 556
effect of too much food on, 734-37
hadith, recognising truthfulness of, 440-43
jihād with, 552
leadership, removing love of from, 502

love of Allah (*See* love of Allah)
presence of in supplication, 677
rancour, protecting from, 120-21
recognises right from wrong, 176
at rest with *birr*, 431-34
as root of *taqwā* and wickedness, 396
as seat of knowledge, 591
as seat of *taqwā*, 574-75
soundness and corruption of, 114-15
supplications for firmness of, 84-85
tawḥīd, complete realisation of, 630-31
as throne for *tawḥīd*, 690
as troubled by doubtful matters, 439-40
unswerving, 350
wrong actions of, 612
zuhd as action of, 499
Heaven. *See* Garden
Hell. *See* Fire
heretical sects, 461, 570
highway robbery, 211
homicide. *See* murder
honour, 110, 342-43
hope in supplications, 676-77
hospitality, 228-31

Hour, the, 55-59, 592. *See also* Day of Rising
houses, 59-60
Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, 291, 684, 748
Ḥumayd ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, 545
Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh, 231
humiliating people, consequences of, 573
humility, 193-96, 591
hunting, while in *ihram*, 647
hypocrisy
  as action of heart, 612
  avoiding *jihād* as, 121
  in disputes, 744
  fear of, among the righteous, 84, 748-49
  freeing oneself from by remembering Allah, 769
  hadith describing, 741
  leadership of hypocrites as sign of Hour, 58
  major and lesser forms of, 742
  no expiation of wrong actions, 401
  plotting and trickery, 750
  prohibition of killing hypocrites, 135
  repenting from, 137
  showing off as, 16

al-ʿIbadānī, Muḥammad ibn Muqātil, 112
Iblīs, 63, 562-63
Ibn ʿAbbās, ʿAbdullāh
advice to a ruler, 127
on certainty of that which is with Allah, 501
on discourses, regular circles of, 460
on divorce in anger, 243
Ḥaram, avoided living in the, 607
on *īmān* and shame, 341
on inheritance of the remainder, 691
on *istiqāmah*, 346-47
on *jihād*, superiority of those who participate in, 609
knowledge of the Qur'ān, 196
on people of *taqwā*, 261
on protective angels, 314
on provision of a worshiper in a cave, 758
on the questions of the Companions, 142-43
on reliance on Allah, 754
on remembrance of Allah as best action, 592
on seeking forgiveness while persisting in wrong doing, 682
on spending *ḥarām* wealth as *ṣadaqah*, 160
on stoning the adulterer, 200

ʿUmarī cases in inheritance, 699
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712
on the tongue, danger of, 473
on vastness of Islam, 275
on the word ʿ*asā* (perhaps) in the Qur'ān, 276
on wrong acts one resolved to do, 613
on wrong, preventing a ruler from doing, 554
Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr
on Islam and *īmān* as synonyms, 37
on killing innovators, 213
on repentance from major wrongs, 283
on using fat from *maytah*, 720
on weight of praises of Allah, 371
Ibn Abī'd-Dunyā, Abū Bakr, 5, 681
Ibn Abī Laylā, ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, 546, 721
Ibn Abī Rawwād, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 127, 735, 770
Ibn Abī Shaybah, 646
Ibn ʿAjlān, Muḥammad, 10, 219
Ibn ʿAjlān, Shumay, 219
Ibn Ashwaʿ, 743
Ibn ʿAṭā', 513
Ibn ʿAṭiyyah, 299
Ibn ʿAwn, 290, 483
Ibn ʿAyyāsh, Abū Bakr, 323, 379

Ibn al-Ḥabīb al-Mālikī, 649
Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, Muḥammad, 379
Ibn Hāni', 227
Ibn Ḥazm aẓ-Ẓāhirī, 97, 248, 283
Ibn Jarīr, 613
Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū'l-Faraj, 162, 443, 684
Ibn Jaz', ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith, 229
Ibn Mahdī, ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, 1
Ibn Maʿīn, 443
Ibn Marzūq, ʿAbdullāh, 735
Ibn Masʿūd, ʿAbdullāh
  on acquiring knowledge for worldly reasons, 144
  on certainty, 500-502
  on civil strife, 557
  on commanding what is right, 552
  on contentment with the Decree, 330
  on the Day of Rising, 584
  on death of a *mu'min*, 638
  decree, hadith of, 68
  on gentleness when forbidding a wrong, 560
  on good action erasing ten wrongs, 281
  on inheritance due to a grandmother, 701
  on inheritance due to female relatives, 692
  on inheritance of the remainder, 692, 696

on intent to profane the House with wrongdoing, 613
on intercession of the Qur'ān, 376
on Jewish and Christian witnesses, oaths from in dispute, 547-48
knowledge of the Qur'ān, 196
on love of the Qur'ān, 627
on love of the world, 518
on meat of Zoroastrians, avoiding, 491-92
on the *mu'minūn*, 438
narrations of, obligation to believe, 454
on prayer at night, 469
regular discourses of, 460
reminders of, 447
on security and health, 419
on sincerity in learning knowledge, 15
on someone who leaves *zakāh*, 64
on spending *ḥarām* wealth as *ṣadaqah*, 160
on spying, prohibition of, 558
on steadfastness, 366
on *taqwā*, 262
on the tongue, 219
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 107-8

on unsettledness of the heart, 434
on verse of forgiveness, 274
Ibn Masiwayh, 734
Ibn al-Mubārak
on anger, 234
on the best action, 126
on good character, 306
on intentions, 10
practice of sharing food with guests, 510
on resolving to persist in a wrong action, 614
on silence, 220
on steadfastness, 333
on superiority of avoiding the *haram*, 151
Ibn Muljam, 252
Ibn al-Mundhir, 539
Ibn al-Munkadir, Muḥammad, 267, 315, 467, 634
Ibn al-Munkadir, ʿUmar, 514
Ibn Quṭaybah, 545, 767
Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ, Abū ʿAmr, 124
Ibn Salūl, ʿAbdullāh ibn Ubayy, 649
Ibn as-Samʿānī, Abū Bakr, 477
Ibn as-Sammāk al-Wāʿiẓ, 266, 502, 513, 736
Ibn Shibrimah, ʿAbdullāh, 478, 555
Ibn Sīrīn

on avoiding calling oneself a *mu'min*, 37
expertise in critical discrimination of hadith, 442
on ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, righteousness of, 455
on acts of kindness without intention, 428-29
on the verse of forgiveness, 274
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 107-8
scrupulousness of, 173
speech of as remembrance of Allah, 770
Ibn ʿUyaynah, 63
Ibn Taymiyyah, Abū'l-ʿAbbās, 701
Ibn ʿUmar, ʿAbdullāh
abstinence of, 734-35
advice of, 659
on *birr*, 435
on civil strife, 557
on the conditions of the *shahādah*, 358
on the Decree, 28-29
divorce of, 95-97
on excessive questioning, 145
on fur from unslaughtered animals, wearing, 491
gatherings of seeking forgiveness, 686
ḥarām, careful use of term, 482-83
on hypocrisy, 748

on intoxicants other than wine, 729
on *jihād* against the self, 332
on praying in a robe purchased with *ḥarām* wealth, 158
on remembrance of Allah, 773
service of, 589
on spending *ḥarām* wealth as *ṣadaqah*, 161
on striking slaves, atonement for, 287
supplication for guidance, 466
on treating one's mother kindly, 282-83
on worldly gain as decrease in rank, 507
Ibn az-Zubayr, 692, 756
Ibrāhīm, 334, 387, 758
Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī, 647
Ibrāhīm ibn Adham
on doing without, levels of, 504
on entrusting oneself to Allah, 336
on hunger, controlling, 736
on love of Allah, 54
protection of, 316
remembrance of Allah of, 770
Ibrāhīm ibn al-Junayd, 769
Ibrāhīm ibn Sulaymān, 593
Ibrāhīm at-Tamīmī, 756

ʿ*iddah* period
determination of, 74
marriage during, 92
prolonging deliberately, prohibition of, 525-26
idolatry, 329
ifrād style Hajj, 21
iḥrām
game, eating while in, 174
sexual intercourse while in, penalty for, 456
hunting while in, penalty for, 647
illness, dispensations for, 533
iḥsān
command to, 247
defined, 49
description of the people of, 300
hadith of, 28-30, 245
Qur'ānic verses on, 47-48
station of, 180
ijtihād, 569
ikhlāṣ, 20
ʿIkrimah, 456
īlā (vowing to refuse sexual intercourse), 526-27
illness
expiation of wrong actions for, 285, 295, 401

performing good actions before, 661
transactions with a terminally sick person, 93
treating or relying upon Allah, 756-57
īmān
attaining essential reality of, 328
branches of, 35
closeness to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ based on, 598-99
coercion into saying things contrary to, 644-45, 650
commanding right and forbidding wrong as attributes of, 557-58
compared with the term Islam, 36-39
in the Decree, 34
deeds as not part of, 34-35
degrees of, 40-41
effect of wrong actions on, 191-92
extinguishes the Fire, 360
and good character, 305-6
hadith of, 215
as inward beliefs, 33
loving for others what one loves for oneself, 191
loving one another as prerequisite of, 356
and modesty, 341

perfection of, 116
protection of, 316-18
purity as half of, meaning of, 364-65
Qur'ānic verses about, 43
reliance on Allah, 754
ṣadaqah as proof of, 373
savour of, tasting, 44, 45, 373
as seeing enormity of one's wrong actions, 290
after Signs of the Hour as of no benefit, 662
as straightness of the heart, 115
taqwā in secret as mark of, 268
tree, simile of, 65
unseen, excessive investigation into, 493-94
unswerving, 350
ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn, 342
incumbent (*wājib*), use of term, 477-79
indigestion, 734
inheritance
bequests, 97-99
due to female relatives, 693-94
due to maternal relations, 707-8
due to spouses, 707
due to two daughters, 697-98

financial transactions with a terminally sick person, 93
grandparents, 701-3
hadith of, 691
harming others with bequests, 525
obligatory shares, 694-95
overstepping the limits on, 484
remainder left after distribution of shares, 691-92
selling when division is difficult, 531
of someone without direct heirs, 703
as a third of knowledge, 366
ʿUmar's judgements on, 456
ʿUmarī cases, 699
when there are only male children, 698
injustice
Allah prevents Himself from, 383-84
associating partners with Allah as, 385
hadith of, 381-82
wronging other people, 385-86
in-laws, as prohibited to marry, 710
innovation
blameworthy, 461-62
in contracts, 91
defined, 458

good, meaning of, 459-61
hadith of, 87-88
as preferring whims over the Sharīʿah, 671
in worship, 88-89
types of, 460-61
innovators, 212-13, 307
intentions
acts of kindness without, 428
to commit wrong, 612-13
defined, 4-5
expressing verbally, 26
fiqh, meaning of in, 20
as a foundation of Islam, 2-3
in freeing slaves, 25
hadith about, 1, 8-10
in *ḥalāl* actions, 411-12
in oaths and divorce, 23-25
mixing, 18
not required for abandoning wrong actions, 151
Qur'ānic verses about, 5-8
showing off, 17
to sleep to strengthen oneself for worship, 510
transitory thoughts to show off, 19
various positions on, 3

without action, reward for, 608-9
intercession
of someone to whom one gave *ṣadaqah*, 583-84
of the Qur'ān, 369, 376
intimate discourse, 51-53
intoxicants
prohibition of, 482, 719
definition of wine, differences in, 728
drinking, as approaching major wrong actions, 731
from other than grapes, 728-29
ḥadd and discretionary punishments, 731-32
hadith of, 725
solid, 730
investigation, excessive, 492-94
invitations from someone whose wealth is *haram*, 108
ʿĪsā ibn Maryam
on *dunyā*, 654
on intimate discourse with Allah, 774
second coming of, 66
on sincerity, 122
on provision, 758
on *taqwā*, attainment of, 305
on time, using wisely, 505
ʿIshā' prayer, 779

Isḥāq ibn Manṣūr, 691
Isḥāq ibn Rahwayh
on abandoning means completely, 759
on commanding the right and forbidding wrong, 478
on corroborative evidence, requirement of claimant to produce, 545
on doubts about a divorce, 105
on the foundations of the *dīn*, 2
on good character, 306
on inheritance of the remainder, 691-92
on oaths to divorce, 646
on opposing tyrannical rulers, 555
prayer, dividing parts of into sunnah and incumbent, dislike of, 480
on punishing with fire, 252
on reflecting on the Creator, prohibition of, 494
on sale of dogs, 721
on transacting with someone who has *haram* wealth, 107
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712
water, laws relating to use of, 532
Islam
abandoning, 204-7, 211-12

accepting under duress, 651
accepting with preconditions, 131
compared with the term *īmān*, 36-39
converting to, 185-86, 275
defined, 42
five supports of, 64
hadith of intentions as foundation of, 2-3
as leaving prohibited things, 32
looking at those above one in, 195-96
metaphor of, 32-33
natural disposition, 388-89
as outward actions, 30-31
sectarian arguments, 568-69
as straight path, 484
Ismāʿīl, 758
Ismāʿīl al-Mālikī, 542
Istighfār. *See* forgiveness
istiqāmah
defined, 348-49
hadith of, 345
See also steadfastness
iʿtikāf
invalidation of, 90-91
prohibition of remaining silent throughout, 221

ithm. *See* wrong actions
Iyās ibn Muʿāwiyah, 545

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, 234
Jabalah ibn al-Ayham, 239
janābah, merit of purification from, 367-68
Jibrīl, questions of, 28
jihād
  against the self, 332-33
  avoiding only through a valid excuse, 121
  command to fight, 130
  intention behind, 13-14, 17
  with heart, as last to be overcome, 552
  as highest part of the religion, 471-72
  as a just word to a tyrannical leader, 555
  as means of inviting to Islam, 624
  mutilation, prohibition of, 248-49
  as necessity for entering the Garden, 356
  nullified by usury, 291
  obligation of, 478-79
  reason for omission of from the five supports, 66
  remembrance of Allah as superior to, 413, 767-68
  steadfastness in, 332
  taking a wage, 18

See also fighting
Jubayr ibn Nufayr, 557
judges, mistakes of, as forgiven, 644
Jumuʿah prayer
admonition before, 447
expiation for what occurs between, 282, 296
first call to prayer, innovation of, 459
al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, 360, 513
Jundub ibn ʿAbdullāh, 518
justness, 622-23

Kaʿb ibn Mālik, 394, 430, 636
kalālah (someone without direct heirs), 703
kashf, 440
Khabbāb ibn al-Arat, 627
Khālid ibn Maʿdān, 407, 770
Khālid ibn al-Walīd, 135, 250
Khālid aṭ-Ṭaḥḥān, 378
kharāj tax, 457
al-Khaṭṭābī, 1, 56
Khawārij, 41, 212, 461, 633
Khawlah bint Thaʿlabah, 242-43
al-Khawlānī, Abū Idrīs, 313, 382
al- Khawlānī, Abū Muslim, 149, 633, 773

al-Khawwāṣ, Abū ʿUbaydah, 735
Khaybar, 132, 204
Khiḍr, 397
khulʿ divorce, 651
khulafā', right-acting, 453-58
al-Khushanī, al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā, 737
khuṭbahs
  making eloquent and concise, 447-48
  of the Prophet, 87, 448-49
kingdom of Allah, 395
kingship, 57
kittens, dispute about, 545
knowledge
  categories of, 591-92
  as condition for commanding good, 560
  fear of Allah as source of, 148-49
  humble submissiveness as first to be removed from the world, 591
  learning for ulterior motives, 15
  lords of, as those who act on it, 519
  loss of as sign of the Hour, 59
  merit of seeking, 589-91
  saying 'I don't know', 365
  as source of *taqwā*, 263

studying after the morning prayer, 592-93
teaching, as *ṣadaqah*, 407-8
three types of, 366
writing explanations of hadith and Qur'ān, 461
kufr
by committing a major wrong act, 39
prayer, abandoning as, 62-63
preferring one's destruction to, 41
repenting from, 185-86
retaliation for murdering a *kāfir*, 203-4

lawful. *See ḥalāl*
Laylat al-Qadr, 278, 283
al-Layth, 534
leaders. *See* government
leather, from unslaughtered animals, 491
liʿān divorce, 141, 543
life
purpose of, 508-9, 515
transience of, 654-60
light, 374-75
light of Allah, 51
limits of Allah, 288, 311, 483-86
lineage, 597

loans
allowing time to the debtor, 429
being forced to pay, 651-52
deferring repayment of, 534
Garden, prohibition of entering until paying debts, 356
overlooking debts for people in difficulty, 585
excellence of, 426-27
See also contracts; transactions.
lost property, 549
love
of the *awliyā'* for the sake of Allah, 628-29
brotherly. (*See* brotherhood)
compared with fear, 121
as highest degree of reliance on Allah, 763
of the Prophet, 42, 670
remembrance of lovers, 771-72
love of Allah
as closeness, 126
feeling at ease with Allah, 54
heart of lovers attached to Allah, 774
and *maʿrifah*, 320, 629-30
as obedience, 670-72
as preventing weariness of good actions, 626-27

Qur'ānic verse on, 623
sign of, 769
supplications for, 625-26
tending one's heart, 115-16
as through love of the *awliyā'*, 628-29
through optional actions, 623-24
Luqmān, 183, 681
lying
to children, prohibition of, 743
in contracts, 744-45
prohibition of, 573-74
as trait of hypocrisy, 742
when permissible, 567
lynx, selling, 723

Maʿbad al-Juhanī, 28, 34
madness, engaging in *dhikr* until one is accused of, 767
Maghrib prayer, 779
magic, 207, 473
Māʿiz, 200, 587
major wrong actions
as cause for being excluded from the Garden, 356
drinking intoxicating drinks as approaching, 731

repentance from, 283-85
See also wrong actions
Makhūl, 107, 483, 557, 649
Makkah
intending to profane the House with wrongdoing, 613-14
multiplication of wrong acts in, 607
malice, 42, 193
Mālik, Imam
on argumentation, 146-47
on bidding up a price, 565
on commanding the right and forbidding wrong, 478
on doubts about a divorce, 105
on doubts about impurity, 106
on eating forgetfully while fasting, 646
on excessive questioning, 146
exorbitant price, option to cancel sale because of, 528
ḥalāl and *ḥarām*, careful use of terms, 479-80
on heretical sects, 461
on how the death penalty is carried out, 249-50
on *ʿiddah*, prolonging deliberately, 526
on *iʿtikāf*, invalidation of, 91

on marriage to a woman who is already engaged, 571
on murder through coercion, 648
on oaths from trustworthy people, 549
on oaths in disputes, 545
on opposing tyrannical rulers, 555
on a person who refuses to fast, 135
on a person who refuses to pay *zakāh*, 135
prohibition of intending usury in a contract, 26
on reciting the Qur'ān in groups as innovation, 593
on sale of dogs, 721
on selling a songstress, 719
on spying, penalty for, 209
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712
on using fat from *maytah*, 720
on vowing to refuse sexual intercourse (*īlā*), 527
on water, laws relating to use of, 532
zuhd of, 513
Mālik al-Ashjaʿī, 336
Mālik ibn Dīnār
on eating little, 735
standing all night in fear of the Decree, 83
supplication of Ḥabīb al-ʿAjamī, 634
on weeping, 280, 372

on *zuhd*, 513
Mālik ibn Mighwal, 54
Maʿmar, on sincerity, 126
man
creation of, showing gratitude for, 418-19
hearts of between two finger of the All-Merciful, 84-85
loving for others what one loves for oneself, 191-92
phases of life in the womb, 69
transience of this life, 657-60
manslaughter, 647
maʿrifah, 320, 462, 629-30, 771
Mariyah, 56, 213-14
marketplaces, remembering Allah in, 775
marriage
emigrating for, 12-13
family members not permitted to marry, 709-11
inheritance due to spouses, 707
mutʿah, prohibition of, 457
prohibited marriages, 92
proposing to someone already engaged, prohibition of, 570-71
shunning one's wife, 570
without permission of the bride, 92

women prohibited to unite in marriage, 711
martyrdom, 296, 555
Maʿrūf al-Karkhī, 149, 263, 321, 660
al-Marwadhī, 479, 659
al-Marwazī, Abū Isḥāq, 343
al- Marwazī, Muḥammad ibn Nasr, 37, 365
Masrūq, 403, 649, 692
Maymūn ibn Mihrān, 151, 262
medicine
abstinence as, 734
reliance on Allah, 756-57
See also illness.
menstruation, prohibition of divorce during, 95-97
Messengers. *See* prophets
mid-afternoon prayer, 516, 777-78
mindfulness of Allah
hadith of, 309-10
protection of family and wealth because of, 314-16
protection of *īmān* because of, 316-18
Qur'ānic verses on, 311-14
See also taqwā.
minor wrong actions
accounting of, 292
erasure of, 281-82

persisting in, avoiding, 300-301
repenting from, 297
See also wrong actions; disobedience
Misʿar, 770
miscarriage, 74-75
mistakes
defined, 645
hadith of, 641-43
modesty
compared with weakness and inability, 342
hadith of, 339
as guarding head and belly, 181
as part of *īmān*, 45, 341
as preventing ugly acts, 340
types of, 341-42
monkeys, prohibition of selling, 723
morning prayer
inhabitants of the Garden seeing Allah at time of, 516
merit of reciting and studying in groups after, 592-93
remembrance of Allah after, 777-78
mothers
Garden, entering by good treatment of, 283

good treatment of, precedence of, 434
inheritance due to, 692, 699-702
looking after, as atonement for wrong, 288-89
See also family; parents; children.
Muʿādh ibn Jabal
on deviation of a wise person, 437
on excessive questioning, 145
extreme concern for right actions, 465
hadith of *taqwā*, 257
on inheritance due to the daughter, 692
knowledge of, 149
on remembrance of Allah, his love of, 768
on sleeping, reward for, 510
in Yemen, 131
Muʿādhah al-ʿAdawiyyah, 634
Muʿāwiyah, 15
mufarridūn (those utterly devoted to Allah), 766-67
al-Mughīrah ibn Ḥakīm aṣ-Ṣanʿānī, 770
Mughīth ibn Sumayy, 682
Muḥammad. *See* Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ
Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl al-Balkhī, 117
Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ
on eating little, 735
humility of, 196

on supplications, 169
on this world as a journey to the next, 657
on transience of life, 660
al-Muḥāsibī, al-Ḥārith, 267, 304
Mujāhid
on expressing intention verbally, 26
on multiplication of wrong acts in Makkah, 607
on preventing a mother from breastfeeding, 527
on protective angels, 314
on shaking hands, 572
on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
on *wuḍū'*, 366
mules, buying and selling, 721-22
mu'minūn
accidental murder of, 647
concealing vulnerabilities of, 586-87
consequences of humiliating, 573
contentment with an affliction, 329-31
description of, 301
distress of, easing, 581-82
entering the Fire, 360
fear of hypocrisy, 748
following the Prophet, obligation of, 669
harming, prohibition of, 524

having a bad opinion of, 612
hearing reminders, effect of on, 448-49
hesitation of Allah over taking soul of, 617-19, 636-39
humility towards, showing, 624
insight of, 437-38
inviolability of, 577
loving to meet Allah at moment of death, 637-38
loving, for the sake of Allah, 628-29
making peace between, 46
as mirrors to each other, 579
nobility of is in standing at night, 518
prayer as light of, 372
security on Day of Rising, 324
as seeing enormity of wrong actions, 290
steadfastness in the face of a trial, 331
as strangers in the world, 654-55
supplication of angels for, 294
types of, 45
See also Muslims
wrong actions repaid in this world, 400
murder
by someone who would inherit, 544
coercion into committing, 648

retaliation for, 136, 202-4
no atonement for, 287
qasāmah oath, using in dispute about, 541
in self-defence, 209, 211
See also death penalty
Murjiʿah, 41, 63, 281, 461, 748
al-Murtaʿish, 629
Mūsā, 334, 388, 398, 422, 768-69
Mūsā ibn Aʿyun, 262
musāqah, 488
Musaylimah, 176-77
musical instruments, 555, 718-19
Muslim al-ʿĀbid, 54
Muslim ibn Yasār, 54
Muslims
compared with *Mu'minūn*, 37-38
defending, 126
faults of, veiling, 126-27
looking down on, prohibition of, 42
prohibition of killing, 136, 199
sincerity towards, 120, 124-25
spying on, 209
visiting, merit of, 157
waging war against, 206

See also Mu'minūn
al-Mustawrid al-ʿIjlī, 724
mutʿah marriage, prohibition of, 457, 479, 558
al-Muʿtamir ibn Sulaymān at-Taymī, 784-85
mutanattiʿūn, 492-93
Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbdullāh
accepted supplications of, 633
on action, 403-4
on being merciful, 254
on intentions, 10
on saying 'I turn in *tawbah* to Him', 684
supplication of, 20
Muʿtazilah, 41, 298
Muthannā al-Anbārī, 762
mutilation, prohibition of, 248-51
Muwarriq al-ʿIjlī, 184, 237, 682
muzāraʿah, 488
mysticism, innovations stemming from, 462

nabīdh, 102, 728-29
Nafiʿ ibn Jubayr, 10
nafs. *See* self
an-Nahrujuri, Abū Yaʿqūb, 671
najash transaction, 565

an-Nakhaʿī, Ibrāhīm
claimants, practice requiring oath from, 546
ḥarām, careful use of term, 483
on intoxications of death, 637
on sale of dogs, 722
on separating a slave mother and child, 94
on superiority of seeking wealth to spend in charity, 513
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 108
natural disposition, 388-89, 436
Nawf al-Bakālī, 254
an-Naysabūrī, Abū Hafṣ, 772
nearness of Allah, 51-52
Negus, 11
neighbours
causing harm to, 529
fixing timber onto wall of, 531
harming, enormity of, 221-23, 227-28
honouring, 215
types of, 223-24
nicknames, avoiding, 298
Night of the Decree, 278, 283
nobility, 518-19, 574, 607-8

Nūḥ, 334, 563
an-Nuʿmān ibn Qawqal, 632
oaths
against a claimant, 538-40
breaking under duress, 651
breaking forgetfully, 646
intention behind, 23-25
of Jewish and Christian witnesses, 547-48
keeping, importance of, 312
not right of claimant, 541, 543
not taken for rights of Allah, 548
qasāmah, 541-42
as right of defendant, 545
swearing in anger, 242-44
swearing never to return to wrong actions, 684
taking along with corroborative testimony, 546-47
from trustworthy people, 549
witnesses and, 542-43
obedience
becoming accustomed to, 630
birr, 435-36
as condition for nearness to Allah, 621
even when heart is not at ease, 438-39
as gratitude for blessings, 424-25

as love of Allah and His Messenger, 116, 670-72
optional acts of, 425, 466
as selling oneself to Allah, 377
to rulers, 445-46, 451-54
steadfastness in, 375
obligations
discharging as reason for nearness to Allah, 622
hadith of, 351, 475-77
of *jihād*, 478-79
prayer as greatest, 622
proving that something is among the, 488
as sufficient to enter the Garden, 353
wājib and *farḍ*, difference between, 477-78
Oman, 133
optional acts of obedience
attaining to love of Allah, 623-24
as degree of thankfulness, 425
drawing near to Allah through, 466, 621-22
optional prayers, 776-77
reciting Qur'ān as greatest, 627
Outstrippers (Sabīqun), 196

Paradise. *See* Garden
pardoning, as *taqwā*, 270

parents
erasing wrong actions through serving, 283, 288-89
obeying on doubtful matters, 112
obligation of good treatment of, 478
See also family; mothers; children
partners, associating with Allah, 359, 385
pasture, 112, 532
patience, 328-29, 331, 366-67, 554-55
Pen, the, 79, 327
people
avoiding asking one's needs from, 325
despairing of, 336
harming, prohibition of, 524
reconciling between, 425-26, 567-68
serving, merit of, 588-89
treating well, as *ṣadaqah*, 407-9
wronging, consequences of, 385-86
People of the Book, 106-7
permissibility, assumption of, 488-89. *See also ḥalāl*
Persia, 656
pigs, prohibition of selling, 719-20
plaintiff. *See* claimant
plotting and trickery, 750
pointing, during supplication, 165

polygyny, 711
Pool, the (*al-ḥawḍ*), 450
poor, the, hadith of, 405
pork, 102
poverty, 317
praise of Allah, 368-71, 402, 412-14, 422-24
prayer
  abandoning, 62, 207
  best times for, 469-71
  in clothes purchased with *ḥarām* wealth, 158
  congregational, merit of, 373
  considered as part of world, 514
  contract with Allah to enter Garden, 355-56
  as defence in the grave, 369
  dividing elements of into sunnah and incumbent, 480
  erasure of wrong actions, 281
  fighting people until they establish, 130-32
  fighting those who give up, 134-35
  forgetting to perform, 645
  forgiveness of wrong actions, 277
  as greatest physical obligation, 622
  innovation in, 89
  intention in, 20-21

invalidation of, 90
lengthening, 240, 448
as light, 371-72
multiplication of reward for, 603
at night, 468-70
optional, 776-77
as proof of *īmān*, 373
purity as half of, 365-66
for rain, 165
rejected for forty days after drinking wine, 65
remembrance of Allah after, 615, 777-79
shortened, as a *ṣadaqah* from Allah, 407
showing off in, 17
speaking during, 646
as subsistence of the *dīn*, 471-72
supplication during, 787
walking to, 295-96
when one is unable to stand, 153
without *wuḍū'*, forgetfully, 645
wuḍū' as half of, 367-68
preconditions, accepting Islam with, 131
predestination. *See* Decree
pregnancy
effect on *ʿiddah* period, 74

formation of the embryo, 69-73
pride, 193-94, 221, 425, 574-76
profiteering, 173, 528
prohibitions
asking excessive questions about, 140-41, 488
excellence in abandoning, 247
hadith of, 139
seriousness of, compared to commands, 150
promises, breaking as trait of hypocrisy, 742-43
property
cursing one's, prohibition of, 241
expropriating, 161-14
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
admonition, circles of, 447
character of, 239-40, 436
closeness to, as based on *taqwā*, 598-99
contentment with, 43-44
explained every prohibited and permitted matter, 102-4
farewell address, 450-52
following, hadith of, 667-68
as frequently seeking forgiveness, 686-87
hunger of, 738
khuṭbahs of, 87, 448-50

love of, 42, 670
as ordered to go straight, 348
prayer as beloved to, 372
protected pasturage of, 112
questioning, prohibition of, 140-42, 488
recognising hadith from, 440-43
as remembering Allah at every moment, 768
simile with *ummah*, 656-57
sincerity to, 122-25
taqwā, counsel of, 263-64
uninterrupted fasting of, 755-56
warning to near relatives, 378
women and scent, love of, 509-10
in world as rider resting in shade, 509, 654
prophets
believing in, 33
choice of time of death, 637
doing without the world as sign of, 518
sincerity towards their people, 121
prostitution, being forced into, 649
prostration, 63, 193, 516, 649-50
protected pasturages, 112
provision
effect of wrong acts on, 757

guarantee of, 499-500
public treasury, 161-62
punishment
accusation of adultery, 544
of Allah because of wrong committed openly, 553
and atonement, 285-88
ḥadd and *taʿzīr*, 486
pleading on behalf of the convicted, 587
purification, intention for, 23 (*See also wuḍū'*)
purity
hadith of, 155-56, 363-64
Qur'ānic verses on, 156-57, 364
sleeping in state of, 779

al-Qaffāl, 651
Qārūn, 497, 564
qasāmah, 541-42
al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, 97-99, 545, 548
Qatādah, 323, 347, 526, 539, 687
Qathm al-ʿĀbid, 735
qirān style Hajj, 21
questions, avoiding, 140-41, 488, 492-94
qunūt supplication, 165
Qur'ān

abrogation of verses, meaning of, 611
answers to the questions of the Companions, 142-43
appearance of on Day of Rising, 369, 376
blame of the people of the Fire, 402-3
as the character of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, 239
compilation of written copies, 459-60
explains every prohibited and permitted matter, 102-3
as greatest optional action, 627
junub, prohibition of reciting while, 193
as proof for or against one, 491
reciting and studying in groups, merit of, 592-94
reciting for ulterior motives, 14
sincerity to, 122-24
supplications, verses on, 324, 676, 677, 787
teaching, as *ṣadaqah*, 407
trembling heart of the *mu'min*, 772
Quraysh, command of, 453
al-Quraẓī, Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb, 684

ar-Rabʿ ibn Anas, 613, 769
ar-Rabīʿ ibn Khuthaym, 440, 479, 568
Rabīʿah, 503

Rābiʿah al-ʿAdawiyyah, 372, 514
rain, prayer for, 165-66
Ramaḍān
  atonement for sexual intercourse during, 287
  forgiveness in, 278
  intention for fasting during, 21
  multiplication of wrong action in, 606
  tarāwīḥ prayer, 459
rancour, avoiding, 42, 120-21
rape, 647
ar-Rāzī, Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn, 20
reconciling between people, 567-68
reflecting on the next life, 430
reliance on Allah
  abandoning means completely, 758-61
  avoiding using as means to attract provision, 762
  hadith of, 753
  not negated by striving with means, 754-55
  supplication for, 754
  three degrees of, 763
  when ill, 756-57
remembrance of Allah
  after prayer and before sleep, 615, 777
  as best action, 592

conciseness in, 781-84
as delight of the hearts, 773
engaging in until they say ‘he is mad’, 767
erasing wrong actions with, 278-79
freeing oneself from hypocrisy through, 769
gatherings for, merit of, 592-96
hadith of, 765
of lovers, 771-72
in marketplaces, 775-76
multiplication of reward for, 603-4
and nearness of Allah, 627-28
in next world, 516-17
as purpose of world, 515
remembering without constraint, 771
as *ṣadaqah*, 406, 409, 412
as sign of love of Allah, 769
speech without, as regretted, 218-19
as superior to *jihād*, 413, 767-68
superiority of to *ṣadaqah*, 412-14
‘There is no power and no strength but by Allah’,
merit of, 326, 336
trembling of hearts, 41
utter devotion to, 766-67
on waking up at night, 779-80

weight of on the scales, 368-71
renegades, 204-7, 250
rennet, 490
repentance
acceptance of, 275-76
concealing one's wrong action after, 587
as condition for seeking forgiveness, 682-84
from minor wrong actions, 297
necessary for major wrong actions, 281-87
of people of *taqwā*, 270
Qur'ānic verses on, 273-76
rejoicing of Allah at, 392-93
saying 'I turn in *tawbah* to Allah', 683-85
seeking forgiveness, 271
supplications for forgiveness, 390-91
through prayer, 277-78
transformation of wrong into good, 186-88
validity of until the Signs of the Hour, 662-63
See also forgiveness
retaliation, 202-4, 249
Riyāḥ al-Qaysī, 687, 736
ar-Rubayyiʿ bint an-Naḍr, 631
rūḥ, 69, 74-75
rulers. *See* governance

ar-Ruwaybidah, 58
Ruwaym al-Baghdādī, 116, 671
ar-Rūyānī, 529

Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 593, 758
Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, 510, 635, 664, 754
Saʿīd ibn ʿUbayd, 541-42
Saʿīd ibn Zayd, 632
Saba', Queen of, 39
sacred months, 606
ṣadaqah
  confidential discussions for, 8
  due from every bone in the body, 415-18
  erasing wrong actions through, 289-90
  as extinguishing wrong action, 468
  family, spending on, 410-11
  feeding people, excellence of, 31
  al-fiṭr, 477
  giving as the perfection of *īmān*, 46-47
  giving little things in, 291-92
  hadith of, 405, 415
  with *ḥarām* money, 160-61, 163-64
  hospitality to travellers, 228-32
  insincerity in, 15, 17

intercession of recipients of, 583
loans as, 426-27
multiplication of reward for, 603-4
to neighbours, 224-27
nullified by insults, 291
as proof (*burhān*) of *īmān*, 373
putting things right between people as, 425-26
in sexual relations, 409-10
as shade on the Day of Rising, 584
spending lost property as, 161
subletting, giving profits of as, 173-74
superiority of remembrance of Allah to, 412-13
of the tongue, 408
well-recognised virtues (maʿruf) as, 407
Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab
on divorce during menstruation, 97
on funeral prayers for miscarried foetus, 75
on *ḥadd* punishments, 285
on inheritance due to a grandmother, 701
on intention without action, reward for, 608
on reflection, 430
on safeguarded child because of right-acting father, 315
on spending lost property as *ṣadaqah*, 161

Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ 168, 488, 632, 635
sadd adh-dharā'iʿ, 113
Safīnah, 316
Ṣafiyyah bint Ḥuyay, 110
Ṣafwān ibn ʿAssāl, 672
Ṣafwān ibn Sulaym, 285
Sahl ibn Saʿd, 518
as-Sakhtiyānī, Abū Ayyūb, 62
as-Sakhtiyānī, Ayyūb, 442, 519
Salam ibn Abī Mutiʿ, 306, 504
sales
  of animals, 721-23
  bidding up the price to fool another buyer (*najash*), 565
  coercion in, 527-28, 651
  of *ḥarām*, hadith of, 717
  market place, supplication for entering, 604-5
  of prohibited items, 92
  scrupulousness in, 172-3
  on top of another's sale, prohibition of, 570-71
  See also transactions; contracts
Sālim ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar, 721
Salmān al-Fārisī
  on anger, 238

on erasing wrong actions, 281
on shame, 340-41
on silence, 219
on the superiority of remembrance of Allah, 414
on supplicating when one is in comfortable circumstances, 322
on transacting with someone who has *ḥarām* wealth, 107-8
on trials a Muslim experiences, 401
travelling provision, share of the world as, 509
salt, free use of, 533
Samurah ibn Jundub, 530
scent, 509-10
scholars
challenging, prohibition of, 146
correcting errors of as sincerity, 125
death of as withdrawal of knowledge from the world, 591
defending weak positions, 569
mistakes of, as forgiven, 644
of hadith, expertise of, 147, 441-43
purpose of acquiring knowledge, 144-45
See also knowledge
scrupulousness

finer points of, when it is appropriate to investigate, 174-75
leaving doubtful matters, 171-72
sculpted forms, prohibition of selling, 718
sectarian arguments, 568-69
self
blaming for trials one experiences, 400-401
jihād against, 332-33
self-reproaching, 403
selling to Allah, 376-78
self-defence, killing in, 209, 211
sermons. *See khuṭbahs*; *Jumuʿah* prayer
service to people, 588-89
sexual intercourse
coercion into, 649
in *iḥrām*, penalty for, 456
prohibited, safeguarding from, 312-13
as *ṣadaqah*, 409-10
vowing to refuse (*īlā*), 526-27
while fasting, 646
withdrawal, 70
ash-Shaʿbī, 306, 711,
shade of Allah, 51
ash-Shāfiʿī, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs

on adultery, punishment for someone accused of, 544
on bidding up a price, 565
on breaking oaths under duress, 651
on eating little, 737
on funeral prayers for miscarried foetus, 75
on *ḥadd* punishments as atonement, 285
on how the death penalty is carried out, 249-50
humility of, 197
on *ʿiddah*, prolonging deliberately, 526
on inadvertent harm, legal consequences of, 529
on innovations, categories of, 460-61
on intention to commit wrong, 613
on murder through coercion, 648
on oaths from trustworthy people, 549
on performing Hajj on behalf of others, 21
on a person who refuses to fast, 135
on a person who refuses to pay *zakāh*, 135
on possessing *ḥarām* property, 164
on sale of dogs, 721
on sale on top of another's sale, 571
on sexual intercourse while fasting, 646
on three most important things, 266
on unmarriageability because of breastfeeding, 712

on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
prostitution, position on being coerced into, 649
on water, laws relating to use of, 532
shahādahs
affirming trueness of, 40
as cause for entering the Garden, 356-57
conditions of, 357-59
as the 'head of the matter', 471
as protecting blood of person, 136-37
saying on the deathbed, 361
as sign of Islam in a person, 31-32, 130-32
weight of '*lā ilāha illa'llāh*', 370-71
shaking hands, as increasing brotherhood, 572
shame. *See* modesty
Sharʿīah
permissibility, assumption of, 488-89
ambiguities, reasons for the existence of, 104-5
innovations, 458
questions, avoiding asking, 140-44, 488
See also fiqh; knowledge; scholars
Shaʿwānah the worshipper, 321
ash-Shaybānī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, 99
Shīʿah, 461
ash-Shiblī, 319, 689, 771

Shimariyyah, 90
showing off in good works, 17-19, 344, 504, 610
Shuʿbah, 443
Shurāḥah, 202
Shurayḥ, 534, 545, 546, 549
Shuways al-ʿAdawī, 280
shyness, 110-11
sickness. *See* illness
ṣiddiqūn, 40
Ṣilah ibn Ashyam, 633-34
silence
  speaking well or remaining silent, 215-21
  as remedy for anger, 236-37
  of Allah on certain matters as mercy, 475-76, 492-93
sincerity
  based on love not fear, 121
  good counsel, 126
  hadith of, 119
  obligation of, 122-23
  as prerequisite of good actions, 11
  shunning praise as, 122
  towards Muslims, types of, 125
  See also intentions

sins. See wrong actions
Ṣirāṭ, 373, 398, 590, 598
slander, 291, 567, 578, 587
slave-mothers, 56-57, 74, 528-29
slaves
  accepting invitation of, 229-30
  atoning for murder by freeing, 287
  fleeing from master, 65
  fit of anger, freeing in, 242
  freeing, 25
  good treatment of, 225
  prohibition of separating mother and child, 94
  retaliation for murdering, 203-4
  separating mother and child, prohibition of, 528-29
  songstresses, 719
  striking, atonement for, 287
  umm walad, 456
sleep
  as aid to prayer and remembrance, 510, 726-27
  supplication on waking up at night, 779
  supplication before, 280-81, 316, 615
smiling, as *ṣadaqah*, 408, 427
sneezing, responding to, 389, 426, 429, 572
sodomy, 207, 252

solitude, 304-5
songstresses, 718-19
soul. *See rūḥ*; self
speech
  when angry, avoiding, 236-37, 240
  brevity in, 447-48
  compared with silence, 220-21
  danger of, 350
  excessive, avoiding, 219
  indecent, as spoiling the fast, 467
  lying (See lying).
  prohibited, avoiding, 312
  recording of, 217-18
  tongue, controlling, 472-73
  wrong actions, talking about intention to commit, 610-11
  See also conversation; *khuṭbahs*; tongue
spite, avoiding, 120-21
spitting, 240
spying
  penalty for, 209
  prohibition of, 558
steadfastness
  in afflictions, 331-32

as half of *īmān*, 366
as a radiant light, 374
types of, 375
See also istiqāmah
stoning, 199-202, 210
stranger, being in world as, 653-60
Ṣubh prayer. See morning prayer
subletting, prohibition of profiting from, 173
suckling. See breastfeeding
Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah
on abandoning obligations, 63
on oaths to never return to wrong actions, 684
on remembrance of Allah in the next world, 516
on *taqwā*, 113
on *zuhd*, 503
Sufyān ath-Thawrī
on the Decree, 83
on doing without the world, 503
on eating little, 736
on finding money in one's house, 112
on having a bad opinion of a Muslim, 612
on hypocrisy of the Murjiʿah, 748
on *ʿiddah*, prolonging deliberately, 526
on *iʿtikāf*, invalidation of, 91

on intentions, 10
on people of *taqwā*, 262
on provision, 758
on remembrance of Allah, 770
on resolving to commit a wrong act, 612
on signs of Hour, 663
on supplications, 169
on *taqwā*, 113
on vowing to walking to Hajj, 534
on weight of praises of Allah, 371
on whether the *shahādah* alone is sufficient for the Garden, 358
on women prohibited to unite in marriage, 711
as-Suhaylī, 708
as-Sulamī, Abū ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān, 323
Sulaymān, 644
Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd al-Hāshimī, 19
Sulaymān at-Taymī, 268, 421, 630
Sumayṭ as-Sadūsī, 24
Sunnah, 453-54
supplication
against oneself, prohibition of, 241
of angels for the *mu'minūn*, 294
answers to, types of, 678

asking Allah and not His creatures, 325-26, 388
before sleeping, when waking and after prayer, 280-81, 316, 615
on behalf of the Muslims, as *ṣadaqah*, 407
best time for, 470-71
causes of acceptance, 164-65
causes of rejection, 168-70
for certainty, 501
chief, for forgiveness, 685
in comfortable circumstances, 320-22
comprehensive, 785-86
for contentment, 330
during prayer, 787
for entering a marketplace, 604-5
as essence of worship, 324-25
for fear of Allah, 266, 501-2
firm resolve in, 396
for forgiveness, 391, 679, 681-86
Garden, asking for the, 465
gratitude for one's blessings, 421
for guidance, 466
hope of an answer, accompanying with, 676-77
humility and self-reproach in, 336-37
for *istiqāmah*, 347

Lordship of Allah, invoking, 166-68
for love of Allah, 625-26
for mistakes, Allah's overlooking of, 643
multiplied glorifications, 782-84
near moment of death, 637
for protection and well-being, 314
Qur'ānic verses on, 324, 787
raising hands during, 165-66
reason for Allah not answering, 636
rejection of, reasons for, 683
for reliance on Allah, 754
sneezing, 389
for *taqwā*, 265
of those beloved to Allah, 631-32
through the knowledge of Allah, 688
for traveller, 317
on waking up at night, 779-80
for water, 632-33
for *zuhd* of the world, 503
suspicion, avoiding, 110-11
Suwwār al-ʿAnbarī, 546

aṭ-Ṭabarī, Ibn Jarīr, 285
tahajjud, 468-70

takbīr, 368-70
Ṭalq ibn Ḥabīb, 262
taqwā
actions only accepted with, 159
becoming accustomed to, 630
closeness to Prophet Muḥammad based on, 598-99
definitions of, 113, 263
as guarantee of happiness in the next world, 451
hadith of, 257
having, secretly and publicly, 266-68
heart as root of, 396
maʿrifah, 320
and modesty, 342
as nobility, 574
people of, 261
protection of family and wealth because of, 314-16
as purpose of world, 515
Qur'ānic verses on, 259-61, 270
restraining oneself from the *ḥarām*, 150-52
See also mindfulness of Allah; fear
tarāwīḥ prayer, 459
target, hitting, meaning of, 349
target practice, *prohibition of using animals for, 253*
tasbīḥ, 368-70, 412-14, 420. *See also* remembrance

tawbah. *See* repentance
tawḥīd
as cause for forgiveness, 688-90
complete realisation of, 631
as corrupted by acts of disobedience, 347
simile of tree, 65
as soundness of heart, 115
Ṭāwus
on asking Allah, 326
on excessive questioning, 145
scrupulousness of, 161
on selling skins of *maytah*, 721
tayammum, 153
taʿzīr punishments, 285, 486
temporary marriage, 457, 479, 558
Thābit al-Bunānī, 324, 588, 638, 736-37
thankfulness. *See* gratitude
Thawbān, 325
theft, investigation into, 545
thoughts, passing, 611
time, using wisely, 505, 510
tongue
controlling, 472
knowledge on, 591-92

rejecting wrong with, 552
wrong actions of, 473
See also speech; conversation
trade. *See* sales; contracts; transactions
tranquillity, descent of when the Qur'ān is recited, 594
transactions
bidding up the price to fool another buyer (*najash*), 565
coercion in, prohibition of, 527-28
excellence in, 248
overlooking debts for people in difficulty, 585
scrupulousness in, 172-73
with someone who has unlawful wealth, 107
under duress, 651
See also sales; contracts
travelling
being in the world as a traveller, 509
as cause of an answered supplication, 164
divorce as a result of, 527
fasting not required while, 533
good treatment of travellers, 225
hospitality to travellers, 228-32
reasons for, 182

shortened prayer as *ṣadaqah* from Allah, 407
supplication for a traveller, 317
treachery, 58, 744-45
trees, planting as *ṣadaqah*, 411
trusts, discharging faithfully, 746
truth
praise and blame because of, 502
speaking, even if one fears a people, 554
natural inclination to, 388-89
at-Tustarī, Sahl ibn ʿAbdullāh
on activity and reliance, 755
on disciples and gnostics, 84
on *ikhlāṣ*, 20
on talking about what does not concern one, 184
tyrannical rulers, 554-55

ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, 285, 591
ʿUbaydullāh ibn Abī Jaʿfar, 221
ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥasan, 546
Ubayy ibn Kaʿb
on excessive questioning, 145
on stoning the adulterer, 202
on concern for other than Allah, 631
on Yemeni cloth dyed with urine, 491

Uḥud, battle of, 632
ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz
on anger, 237-38
avoided living in the Ḥaram, 607
on contentment with the Decree, 330, 763
on discharging one's obligations, 622
discourses, advice to those who give, 460
on intoxications of death, 637
on the forerunners, 767
on obligations of *īmān*, 35
on praising Allah for His blessings, 422-23
return of unjustly taken property, 550
on reflection, 430
on repentance, 272
as right-acting *khalīfah*, 454-56
on shaking hands, 572
on silence compared with speech, 220-21
on sincerity, 125
on speaking little, 182
on *taqwā*, 151, 262, 265
on transient nature of the world, 654-55
zuhd of, 513
ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb
on abandoning the prayer, 62

on acceptance of supplications, 169
on action, the best form of, 622
on committing wrong acts in Makkah, 607
on contraception by withdrawal, 70
on corroborative evidence, requirement of claimant to produce, 539
drawing water for widows, practice of, 588
on excessive questioning, 145
on fighting those who give up Hajj, 135
on forgiveness, 299, 685
hypocrisy, fear of, 749
on inheritance due to a grandmother, 701
inheritance, ʿUmarī cases in, 699
on *istiqāmah*, 346
on the knowledgeable hypocrite, 748
listening to others recite the Qur'ān, practice of, 592
on *maytah*, wearing clothes made of, 491
on neighbour's water passing over one's land, 531-32
on possessing *ḥarām* property, 164
precedence of judgements of, 455-57
prostitution, position on being coerced into, 649
protected pasturage of, 112

on provision, being content with, 757
on reliance on Allah, 761
on restraining oneself from the *ḥarām*, 152
shayṭān of as too much in awe, 630
on speaking excessively, 219
Sunnah of, obligation to follow, 454
taqwā, counsel of, 264
tarāwīḥ prayer, innovation of, 459
on wine, 729
on Yemeni cloth dyed with urine, 491
zuhd of, 507
ʿUmayr ibn Hāni', 770
Umm Qays, 12-13
Umm Qirfah al-Fazariyyah, 250
umm walad, 456
ummah, does not agree on an error, 104
unfortunate, the, 81-83
unseen, excessive investigation into the, 493-94
ʿUraynah, people of, 250-51
urine, dyeing cloth with, 491
Usayd ibn Hudayr, 594-95
usury
in contracts, 92
doubts about, 172

nullifies *jihād*, 291
prohibition of intending in a contract, 26
sale conducted under pressure as, 528
taking payment from wealth gained by, 107-8
ʿUtbah al-Ghulām, 197
ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān
first call to prayer on *Jumuʿah*, innovation of, 459
on love of the Qur'ān, 627
protected pasturage of, 112
as right-acting *khalīfah*, 454
as treasure of Allah, 512
on two *rakʿats* of *wuduʿ*, 277
uniting Muslims on one *muṣḥaf*, 460
Uways al-Qarnī, 149, 660

voluntary acts. See optional acts of obedience
vows, innovations in, 88-89

Wābiṣah ibn Maʿbad, 432
wages, taking for performance of a good deed, 18
Wahb ibn Munabbih
on acceptance of supplications, 169
advice to someone who visited royalty, 326
on blessings compared with worship, 420
on conditions of the *shahādah*, 358

on enmity to the *awliyā'*, showing, 620
on health and well-being, 419
on love of the world, 518
on pure food, 168
on reliance on Allah, 754
on self-reproach in supplication, 337
wājib, use of term, 477-79. *See also* obligations
Wakīʿ, 456
al-Warrāq, Muḥammad, 664
Wāṣil al-Aḥdab, 758
water
supplication for, 632-33
laws relating to use of, 531-32
weeping
as superior to *ṣadaqah*, 430
because of the Decree, 83
in prayer, 372
merit of, 280, 302
wells
harming neighbour by digging near his, 529
digging as *ṣadaqah*, 411
whims, 359
whisperings, 440, 611
wilāyah

enmity to *awliyā'*, prohibition of showing, 620
hadith of, 617-19
multiplication of wrong acts because of, 607-8
worship of Allah as condition for, 621
wild animals, prohibition of selling, 722-23
wine
addictiveness of, 727
definition of, differences in, 728
drinking under coercion, 648
punishment for drinking, 207-8, 211
prohibition of, 65, 482, 719
wishful thinking, as love of the world, 503, 659
witnesses, 542-43, 546-48
witnessing, station of, 51
witr prayer, 389-90, 488, 777
womb, 69-73, 76-79
world. *See dunyā*
worldly needs, asking Allah for, 388
worship
death during, 638-39
as insignificant compared with blessings, 419-21
innovation in, 88-89
supplication as essence of, 324
in surah al-Fatihah, 366

witnessing, station of, 50
worshiping as though you See Allah, 49
wrong actions
afflictions as atonement for, 285, 295
atoning for by martyrdom, 296
as cause for being excluded from the Garden, 356
coercion into, 647-50
committing disbelief by, 39
concealing, 586-87
disliking in one's heart, 556
effect of on *īmān*, 191-92
effect of on provision, 757
erasing through serving parents
erasure of, 281-82, 288-89, 278-80, 293, 302-3
faults, prohibition of seeking in others, 578
following up with good, 256-57, 269
giving up because of people as showing off, 610
of the heart, 612
intention without action, 609-10, 612-13
invalidating good on the Day of Rising, 291, 297
multiplication of, 605-8, 613-14
perpetrating secretly, effect of, 268-69
persisting in, 300-301, 614
prayer at night extinguishes, 468-69

rejecting as much as one is able to, obligation of, 552-53
repaid in this world for the *mu'minūn*, 400-401
ṣadaqah extinguishes, 468
seeing enormity of, 290
seeking forgiveness from, 271-72
seeking forgiveness while persisting in, 682-84
swearing an oath never to return to, 684
talking about, 610-11
uneasiness in the heart, 431-34
world, love of as main part of, 518
wuḍū'
before sleeping, 779
in difficult conditions, 295
doubts about, 106, 174
erasure of minor wrong actions, 281
forgetting to mention the name of Allah before, 645
illness, dispensation for, 533
as half of prayer, 367-68
intention for, 23
two *rakʿahs* of, 277
washing limbs more than three times, 89
when one is unable to perform, 153

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward, 160, 502, 672

Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr, 473
Yaḥyā ibn Muʿādh
  on brotherhood, 579
  on limits of Allah, guarding the, 671
  on love of Allah, 116
  on the world, 510, 512, 657
Yaḥyā ibn Zakariyyā, 736-37
Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān, 443
Yazīd ibn Zurayʿ, 173
Yemen, 149, 304
Yūnus, 321, 334
Yūnus ibn ʿUbayd, 173, 265, 419, 473, 505
Yūsuf, 40, 770
Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ, 10

Ẓāhiriyyah, 493, 691
zakāh
  as defence in the grave, 369
  fighting people until they pay, 130-35
  al-fiṭr, 153
  intention for, 21
  non-pasturing animals, not taken from, 487
  paying as necessity for entering the Garden, 356

paying as tasting savour of *īmān*, 373
refusing to pay, 63-64, 135
Zakariyyā ibn ʿAdī, 323
Zayd ibn Aslam, 323, 608, 638
Zayd ibn Ḥārithah, 250
Zayd ibn Thābit
on divorce during menstruation, 97
on excessive questioning, 145
ẓihār, 242-43, 714-15
Ziyād, 403
Zoroastrians, cheese of, 490
Zubayd al-Yāmī, 10
Zufar, 648
Zuhayr al-Bābī, 772
zuhd
censure of the world, meaning of, 505-7
compared with seeking wealth to spend in charity, 513
declaring the permissible *haram*, 352-53
definitions of, 498-99, 502-3, 514
gain in *dunyā* as decrease of one's rank with Allah, 507-8
as giving up wishful thinking, 503
hadith of, 495-97

as key to good health, 734
levels of, 504
Qur'ānic verses on, 497-98
as seeing praise and blame equal, 502
az-Zuhrī
on *ʿiddah*, prolonging deliberately, 526
on *iʿtikāf*, invalidation of, 91
on transacting with someone who has *haram* wealth, 107
on whether the *shahādah* alone is sufficient for the Garden, 358
on *zuhd*, 502-3
ẓulm. *See* injustice

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Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī

BEST KNOWN as Ibn Rajab, his full name and titles are: al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu'l-Faraj Zayn ad-Dīn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān (known as Rajab) ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Abi'l-Barakāt Mas'ūd al-Baghdādī ad-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī (736–795 AH). Rajab was the nickname of his grandfather 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, perhaps because he was born in that month. Born in Baghdad, Ibn Rajab learned much from his father, who himself was a great scholar, then studied in Egypt and Damascus where he settled down until he died. Among his eminent teachers were: Abu'l-Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Maydūmī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Khabbāz, Ibrāhīm ibn Dāwūd al-'Aṭṭār, Abu'l-Ḥaram al-Qalānisī, and Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. He was a colleague of the famous hadith expert al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu'l-Faḍl al-'Irāqī. He devoted himself to the subject until he became an expert in all the sciences related to hadith. He then taught hadith, and *fiqh* according to the Ḥanbalī school in the Jāmi' Banī Umayyah and other seats of learning in Damascus. His famous students include scholars like Abu'l-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Naṣr ibn Aḥmad, the *mufti* of Egypt (d. 844 ah), Abu'l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr ibn 'Ali al-Ḥanbalī (d. 844 AH), Dāwūd ibn Sulaymān al-Mawṣilī (d. 844 AH).

He was a leading scholar of the Ḥanbalī school. His work *al-Qawā'id al-kubrā fi al-furū'* is clear evidence of his expertise in *fiqh*, demonstrating an extreme, even exhaustive knowledge of the intricacies of detailed fiqh issues.

He was known for piety and righteousness. His sermons were considered most effective, full of blessing and beneficial. People of all schools were unanimous as to his quality, and the hearts of the people were full of love for him. He was not involved in any worldly business, nor did he visit people of material position.

He wrote: a detailed 20-volume scholarly commentary on the *Sunan at-Tirmidhī*; a commentary on part of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*; a *Dhayl* (Supplement) to *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*; *al-Laṭā'if fi waẓā'if al-ayyām*, *Bayān faḍl 'ilm as-salaf 'alā al-khalaf*.

Among his best known and most referenced works is *Jami' al-'ulūm wa al-ḥikam*, the commentary on *al-Arba'ūn* (the forty hadith) of Imam an-Nawawī. He added eight hadith to the original 42 and commented in detail on all of these fifty hadith. This commentary discusses all aspects of the hadith, the chain of narrations, the narrators, and the text.

Ḥafiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī said of him: "He was a great expert in the sciences of hadith—the historical accounts of narrators, the chains of narration, and meaning of the text."*

*(Based on Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *ad-Durar al-kāminah*, ii. 428, *Inbā' al-ghumr*, i. 460; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt adh-dhahab*, vi. 239; 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī, *Fihris al-fahāris*, ii. 636–7)

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Table of Contents

Title	1
Copyright	2
Contents	7
Publisher's Preface	10
Introduction	12
1. Intention	22
2. Islam, Īmān and Iḥsān	87
3. Islam is built on five	171
4. The Decree	185
5. Innovation	232
6. Ḥalāl, ḥarām and ambivalent matters	265
7. Sincerity and Counsel	308
8. Fighting	330
9. The forbidden and the commanded	353
10. Pure wholesome food	392
11. Doubt	430
12. What does not concern one	446
13. Loving for others what one loves	473

for oneself
14. The blood of a Muslim 489
15. Whoever has Īmān in Allah and the Last Day 529
16. Anger 575
17. Excellence (iḥsān) 605
18. Taqwā of Allah 632
19. Mindfulness of Allah 757
20. Shame and modesty 826
21. Istiqāmah 840
22. The Obligations 853
23. Purity is half of Īmān 879
24. Injustice 920
25. The wealthy and the poor 975
26. Ṣadaqah 1001
27. Birr and ithm 1041
28. Taqwā of Allah, hearing and obedience 1073
29. A comprehensive hadith on action 1119
30. Obligations 1143
31. Zuhd – doing without 1194

32. Causing harm and returning harm 1257
33. Claimants and counter-claimants 1293
34. Seeing something objectionable 1328
35. Brotherhood 1353
36. Easing someone's distress 1398
37. Good and bad actions 1445
38. Optional acts and wilāyah 1482
39. Mistakes, forgetfulness and coercion 1538
40. Be in the world as if a stranger 1566
41. Desire 1596
42. Forgiveness 1612
43. Inheritance 1650
44. Breastfeeding and kinship 1696
45. The sale of ḥarām things 1713
46. Intoxicants 1733
47. A full belly 1753
48. Hypocrisy 1771
49. Reliance on Allah 1796
50. Remembrance of Allah 1824
Index 1879

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